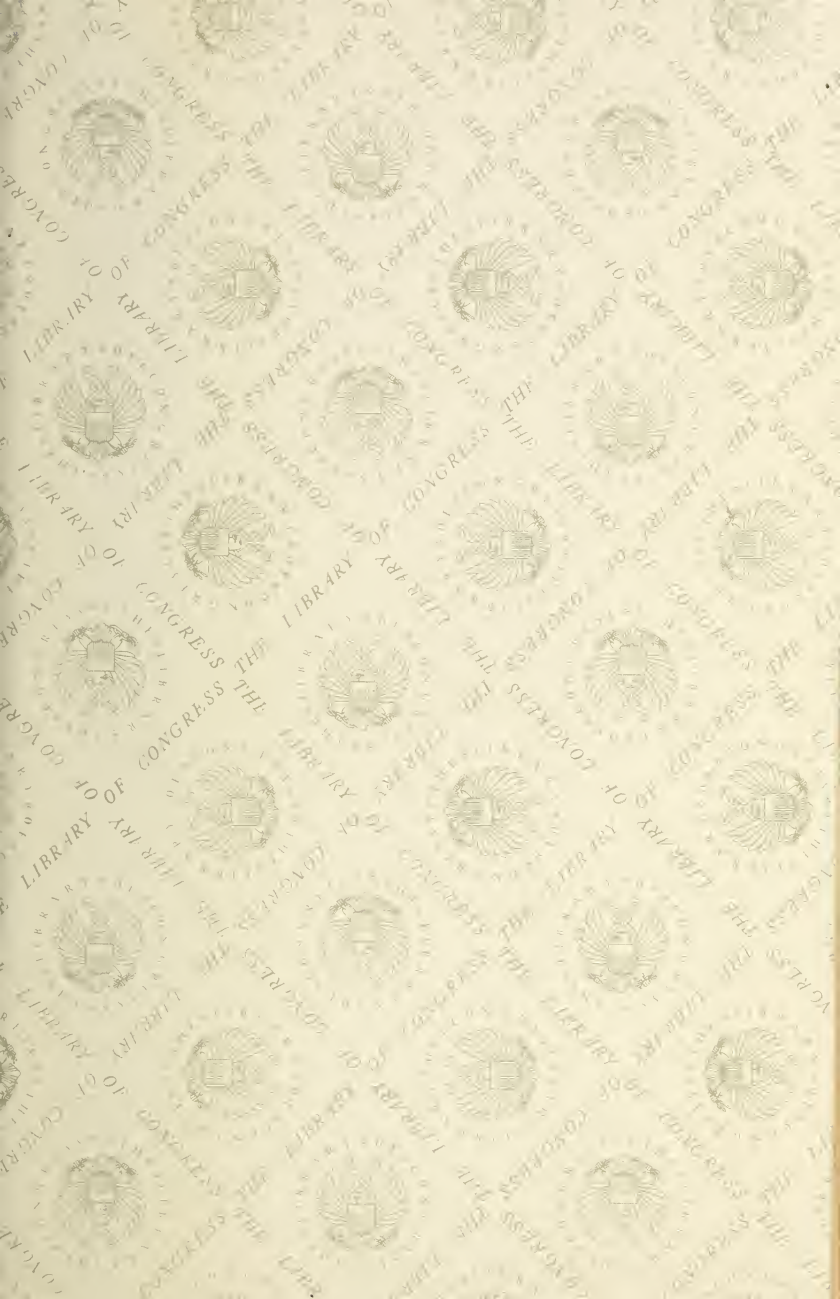


THE STORY  
OF  
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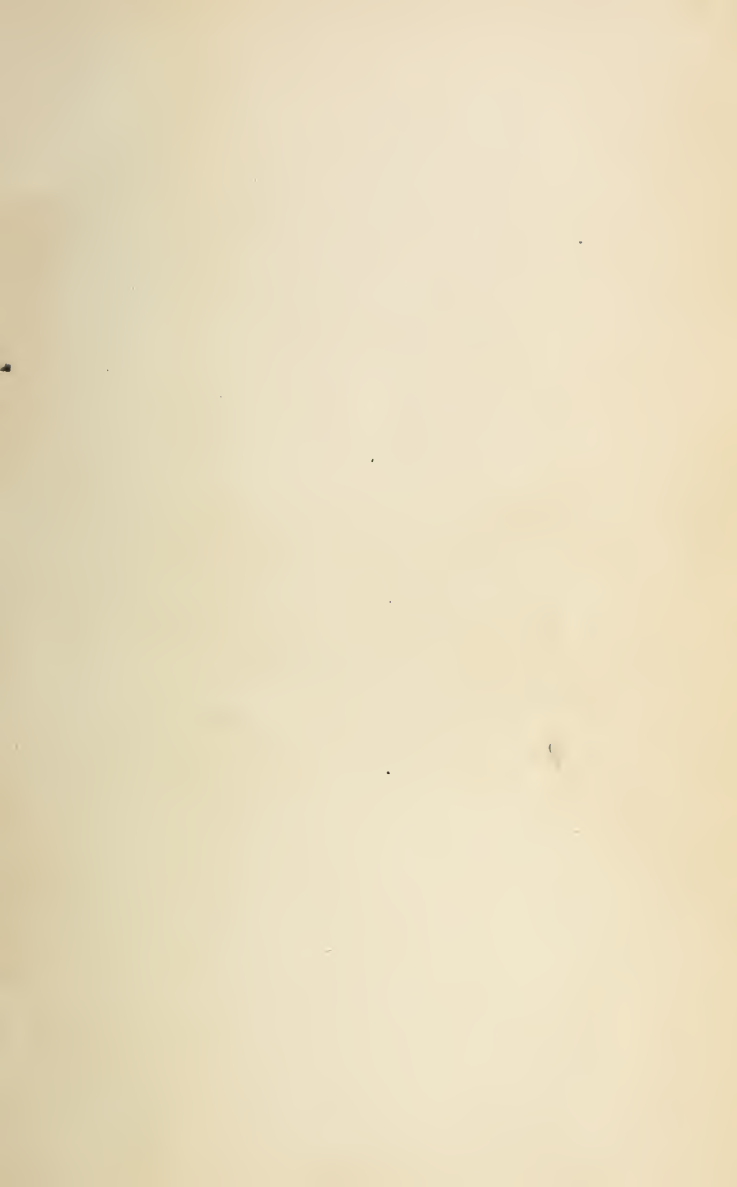
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Geoffrey Chaucer.

# THE STORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

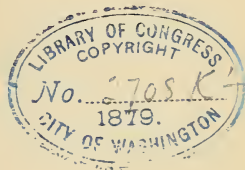
FOR YOUNG READERS.

CHAUCER TO COWPER.

BY  
LUCY CECIL WHITE.  
(MRS. JOHN LILLIE.)

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BOSTON:  
D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY,  
FRANKLIN ST., CORNER OF HAWLEY.

1879

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TO  
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OF 1876.

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## P R E F A C E.

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A few words of introduction seem needed to this little book, which has grown into far greater proportions than was at first intended. The design of the work is very simple: to convey first impressions in an easy, familiar fashion, treating more of the lives, times and influence of great authors than of their works, and so preparing the young reader for the day when he shall learn and appreciate as a scholar.

The papers included in the present volume were originally prepared for two young people who were just stepping into the fascinating region of English Literature, and bringing to it a touch of romance and curiosity without which all records must seem dull indeed. To them, and to all other young people who may read the book, the story is told with a view to fixing dominant periods and people on the mind, leav-

## PREFACE.

ing untouched whatever is unnecessary, or unsuited to young readers. Religious influences in English Literature are treated only in a general way, but whatever produced a distinct phase of thought, such as the Puritan or Restoration periods, is referred to. Marginal notes and references to authorities are so wearisome to young readers that they have been constantly avoided; but the book has been prepared from the best printed and MSS. authorities, and I must here beg to express my appreciation of the kindness and attention of library officials in England, and especially of the courteous and scholarly assistance of Mr. Garnett, of the British Museum.

If this little work presents to the young people before whom it is placed, any pictures which seem real of the times and lives of those who make the "World of books;" if any impulses towards the purest and best in literature are stirred and strengthened, the author's purpose will be gratefully achieved.

"SLIEVE RUSSELL," IRELAND.  
*Oct. 1878.*

# THE STORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

## FOR YOUNG READERS.

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### I.

#### THE DAYS OF CHAUCER.

England in the Fourteenth Century — Chaucer's early friends,  
and life at Court — Imprisonment, Literary Labors and Death  
— *The Canterbury Tales.*

I WISH we might, for one day, find ourselves in the England of the Fourteenth century when Geoffrey Chaucer wrote his wonderful poems. To understand his poetry, we must picture the mode of life; the look of streets and country lanes, of buildings in town and out, of meadows and forests, of how the knights and ladies lived in castles or "Manoirs" as they were called, the Tradespeople living in smaller dwellings, and the lower class a peas-

antry toiling away in poverty, learning nothing, living roughly among themselves and looking up to the knights and squires and great people of the time in their wonderful dazzling costumes, as their lawful rulers to whom they were bound to submit.

Going over England today we find on every side some marks of those days — I am sorry many of the old buildings are fast disappearing, but now and then one finds a castle or dwelling house with much of Edward the Third's day about it ; and we can readily picture an old "Manoir" of the Fourteenth century with its long hall and banquetting table ; its knights and ladies, its squires, pages, cook's and maidens, its retainers and yeomen and porters, its courtyard where the "varlets" stood about, waiting to catch a rein or stirrup, where there was constant clanging of hoofs and show of fine costumes, where sometimes stately processions formed and filed out of the gates on their way to joust and tournament, where banners waved, and lances glittered in the sun, where many times the master and the squire were carried in solemnly for the last time, where every plume was doffed and every heart saddened by the bloodshed and war that raged so often in the country, and where the women, working and waiting and gossiping at home, had, I fear, but dull lives of it, for all the poets and story

tellers sung and wrote of them. Can you fancy the England of those days? Let me describe a great house of that time and from it you can best judge the mode of life among the occupants.

In Edward the Third's day, buildings had begun to improve greatly ; two or three centuries before — or perhaps less — the dwelling houses, even of the great, consisted only of the main hall, and one or two rooms above ; to these were gradually added other rooms, and towers and turrets, and in the Manor-houses of today you can trace the period very accurately in the architecture. The houses were frequently built in a semicircle or quadrangle about the courtyard which was a very important place as you will see. The hall of entrance was the main part of the castle. Here not only were all the meals eaten, but it was the general place of assemblage, and hence its spacious air, and many windows — a smaller room came into very general use in Edward's time and was called the "Parloir," which signified a "talking room" from the French verb "*Parler*" to speak, and from which we have our *Parlor*. The hall was furnished with more comfort than any other room in the house. In the centre was a long table: Sometimes this consisted of heavy boards laid upon trestles, but among the wealthy stationary tables came into use and were called

"*Tables dormant.*" Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales* speaks of these.\* A smaller table stood upon the *Daïs*, or platform, at the upper end of the hall, where the Lord of the Castle and his guests ate.

Behind this, and frequently around the oaken walls, rich tapestries were hung. Midway at the right was usually a huge fire place and above it, sometimes, a sort of two-storied mantle shelf, where odd things were placed. A dresser stood at one end of the hall where the steward kept certain table articles, and occasionally a large chest was also part of the furniture. Above on the rafters *perches* were sometimes placed where curtains were swung or parts of the knights' attire hung up. Benches of a very plain style, and with room for two or three people, were placed about the hall, and a fine bench with tapestry or carpet thrown over was used at the *Daïs*. The sleeping rooms were but scantily furnished. The beds were very soft and rich in covering and at the foot a box was built in, known as the *Hutch*. We find this *Hutch* often spoken of in old romances of the day. Here treasures or jewels were kept over night. The chest was also used in the sleeping rooms.

The window forms a prominent place in all the houses and old illustrations of the Fourteenth cen-

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\* Description of the *Frankleyn*.

ture. It usually had a deep window seat ; sometimes small panes of glass made a casement, sometimes only wooden blinds on hinges were used, and this, as well as other reasons, will account for all the drapery used in the middle ages ; not only did they wish to keep out cold and draughts but, as we shall see, the principal occupation of the ladies of the day was the embroidering and weaving of cloths used for curtaining and hangings as well as banners and fine costumes. Balconies and outside galleries were frequently used, and from these, on festive occasions, gay cloths and banners used to be flung while the ladies above in their mixed costumes and quaint head-dresses must have added very much to the picturesqueness of the scene.

A nobleman in his castle was like the mayor or governor of a city ; so many people were under him, and as it was quite a common occurrence for them to be attacked no wonder they tried to make their residences secure. The warder or porter at the gate, was very careful whom he admitted ; when a guest arrived, the host frequently went down to the entrance to receive him, if he was of high rank, and escorted him into the hall. He had left his weapons with the porter, but a page took his hat and gloves

from him before he sat down, and as an old romancer says

“But ’ere he satte in any sete  
He saluted there, grete and smalle  
As a gentille man shuld in halle.\*

Within the castle gates the lives led were of course various. There were the lords, who were always skilled at arms and much given to fighting either in real war or the tournament. The squires were always the sons of gentlemen, young men who were sent to the great houses to learn the accomplishments thought worthy of their rank. These were, of course, chiefly skilled in horsemanship, and the use of the weapons of the day — bravery and constancy were leading virtues, and made many otherwise stupid men famous all over England. Next, the young squires learned to carve gracefully at table and to dance and sing well that they might be favorites in court society. Some of the ballads and light literature of the day they learned. If they went to Oxford or Cambridge Universities, Latin and French and other languages were acquired, with some logic and mathematics; but few young men of the day could do more than read and write, while many could not even accomplish so much. The women were fre-

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\* Weber's Metrical Romances.

quently more learned, but you see from their mode of life it was hard to be anything but narrow minded. Some of the monks held schools and to these the poor were invited.

The maidens in the castles were often ladies of gentle birth sent also to to be improved by refined associations and to be well brought up ; they waited on the lady of the house, frequently performing menial services, and they were on very familiar terms with the nobleman's family and his guests. Besides these squires and maidens, innumerable servants were kept, and retainers who lived on the domain and were bound to obey the baron's bidding.

Home life had certain pleasures but not much continued peace in those warlike days ; an old couplet will show you the hours of rising and eating ;

*"Lever* (or rise) at six,  
*Disner* (or dine) at *dix* (ten),  
*Souper* (or sup) at six,  
*Coucher* (or sleep) at *dix*."

but an earlier supper about four was frequently taken. Although the dinner hour was between nine and ten in the morning it lasted some time ; in great houses being served with much ceremony. It came in three courses, and in spite of much we would call barbarous in the mode of eating, the cooking was very

elaborate and dishes made up in the most ornamental way. Music preceded the banquet; the squires carved and waited on the table, while the dishes were brought in by servants in a stately procession, on great occasions followed by minstrels performing on small harps, lutes, citterns etc.

The mode of eating required a great deal of personal cleanliness, I should think. Two people ate from the same *trencher*; and this until after Chaucer's day, was made of a huge slice of bread on which the meats were laid; old *MSS.* are full of allusions to manners of eating etc., and there is an old volume of instructions as to how to keep one's fingers out of the gravy, and how to keep one's face clean at table! Later on, I rejoice to say, silver platters were introduced, but in Chaucer's time no such thing was known, and fingers were used instead of forks!

After dinner the minstrels usually came in; these men went from castle to castle, and sang songs which were long accounts of history or people; sometimes of the ancestors of the baron in whose hall they sat. Gradually these stories became well known, and about Chaucer's day, were used by the preachers in order to interest their congregations. About the same time some monks put them into book form and they exist to-day in Latin and are, as you may well imagine, curi-

ous stories which show us much of that mediæval period. Carols were also sung at Christmas and Easter Tide, sometimes without the portals, sometimes within. These form a considerable portion of the Literature of the Fourteenth century. Here is one from an old *MS.* sung at Christmas ;

“ In this tyme a chyld was born —  
To save the sowle that wern forlorn,  
For us he werde a garlond of thorn  
Al it was for our honour.” \*

After listening a time to the minstrelsy the ladies, in fine weather, usually went out into the gardens ; sometimes by themselves, sometimes followed by the knights.†

Gardens were very beautiful even in those early times, and the love of nature and the time of blossom and flower, which is so much spoken of in old poems and romances, grew from the fondness of people of mediæval times for out of door life. The middle and lower classes roamed about freely. The ladies of gentle birth had their gardens and parks. Chaucer is noted for his love of floral scenes and the English daisy is known to this day as Chaucer's flower. All

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\* See books of Percy Society.

† From these, customs of to-day can be traced.

romancers of the Fourteenth century celebrate the gardens, groves, and forests. When May-day came\* even Londoners went to the woods to gather garlands of hawthorn, woodbine, and the pretty May flower.

Here are a few lines from an old *MS.* of the day, showing how in the literature of the time, nature and, above all, the spring season was dwelt upon.

“In the season of April and May when fields and plants become green again and everything living recovers virtue, beauty, and force, hills and glades resound with the sweet songs of birds; and the hearts of all people, for the beauty of the weather and the season, rise up and gladden themselves. Then, we ought to call to memory the adventures and deeds of prowess of our forefathers who laboured to seek honour in loyalty, and to talk of such things as shall be profitable to many of us.” †

Sometimes half the day was spent in the gardens where games were frequently played. Chess was a favorite game, and, a little later, cards came in fashion. Within doors, the ladies worked on frames, embroidering in flowers and coats-of-arms. At tournaments some fair lady always presented the victor with a

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\* It was some days in advance of our first of May.

† *MS.* British Museum Beg. 12. C. XII.

scarf worked by herself, and not unfrequently secret messages were wrought in silk, and the minstrels were employed as messengers.

Hospitality was universal among high and low ; in the castles the guest of rank was escorted by ladies and maidens to his apartment ; there he was furnished with fine linens, and, sometimes, perfumed baths, and treated with every attention. Among the Burghers, or Tradespeople, hospitality was also freely extended ; a knight or poor way-farer riding up, no matter how unknown, was always given shelter and food if he asked it. In such ways a Christian spirit was thought to be shown ; but gradually the Burghers began to let out lodgings, and in the towns it became very general to find rooms and service at one's disposal over night for a small or large sum, while the large Inns or hostelries were more for the commoner classes.

The Burghers lived very comfortably ; but in this class and the lower one, there was a great freedom of speech and manner, which we would think coarse and repulsive to-day. Hence in the literature of the period we find a great deal which is not fit to be read and can only impair or destroy the Christian purity and innocence of a young mind ; but when written, it was simply a reflection of the people and their ways of living and speaking.

You have seen now something of home life in the Fourteenth century. I told you that the women of the household spun and wove various cloths and linens ; but there were also some manufacturers which the good Queen Phillipa of Hainault protected. The workmen at first were from Flanders, Italy and France, but gradually Englishmen learned the craft although for a long time they were quite indifferent to it. From specimens shown to-day, the fabrics manufactured were very many, and we find old accounts of linens, and crewel cloth, and sarsanets, and gold cloths, made and charged to various people at very high prices.

Dress was very sumptuous among the great, and comfortable and picturesque among the middle class. Head-dresses were various, and were greatly ridiculed even by those who wore them. The men wore silken hose, and the "Cote hardie" or "Tabard," a long tight fitting garment reaching nearly to the knees and often richly embroidered. Cloaks were also worn, and the armor was of steel, richly chased or linked.

At court there was, of course, much ceremonial and splendor, but not always great comfort. The large towns were busy places. London, although by no means what it is to-day, was a great city ; the Tower was built and used as a palace, prison, fortress, etc.

The king lived much at Woodstock Palace, which Phillipa also loved.

While life was gay and sad, rich and poor, literature was not widely appreciated. There were some great students, but few books had been written which the people cared for. Religious stories and poems had been collected by the monks. Some beautiful ballads and histories of an earlier day are to be read now. The poems of "Beowulf" and "Cædmon," Aldhelm and Cynewulf, Brunanburk and Maldon, the prose of Bæda, a monk of the Seventh century, who says, "while attentive to the rule of my order and the service of my church my constant pleasure lay in learning, or teaching, or writing," the poetry of Osmin, — all these interesting as they are I can only allude to. The real beginning of English poetry, as we know it to-day, was in the Fourteenth century.

Among the students at Oxford, somewhere about 1348, were three young men, one, Geoffrey Chaucer, John Gower, and Ralph Strode. The three were great friends and comrades and all destined to be distinguished in literature ; but Chaucer's name is best known and beloved to-day. He was a young man in those days and not yet famous in the court of Edward III., although he had already translated the "Romance of the Rose" a French poem by William de

Louis written between 1200 and 1230. He was full of animation and vivacity, and laughing spirits, a contrast to Gower who was sedate and thoughtful, but the two formed a close friendship which no change of fortune ever broke, and it is to the honor of both that it lasted in a time when political feeling might have divided them.\*

Geoffrey Chaucer was the son of a wine merchant living in London, and was born in 1328.† It is to be regretted that the story of his life is not more clearly known, since from the principal events we can see how interesting it must have been. His father appears to have given him every advantage, and from his associating with courtiers and people of rank we judge him to have been of very good family, as in his day the distinction between people of noble and common birth was very great. It is supposed that he was sent both to Oxford and Cambridge and he certainly seems to have been very learned for his day. As I have told you he began to write when very young; in 1356 he received his first official appointment, after which he was continually to be found or heard of in some way associated with the court. At

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\* Some authorities aver that their intercourse was broken just before Gower's death but I can find no satisfactory evidence to uphold this idea.

† Evidences are conflicting as to the exact date of his birth; some writers giving it as 1340, but there seems to be strong evidence in favor of 1328.

this time he was in the service of the king's sons, Princes Lionel and John of Gaunt. To the latter he was devoted all his life; and many of Chaucer's sweetest poems are associated with the name of his great patron. About 1358 he wrote for him a poem entitled "The Assembly of Fowles."

Edward's court was an encouraging one for the young poet, and he was held in high favor. In 1359 he accompanied the king and his sons in their march to Paris. Your history tells you the story of the war, how when bloodshed was at its height Edward vowed to God to make a peace. Chaucer had been taken prisoner, and when the peace was made he was released. Fond as he was of the king's service he was no great warrior, but preferred his English life of peace and plenty where he could walk about in the beautiful spring time and admire the daisies and field flowers to his heart's content. He received from the crown a pension of twenty marks, worth in our day about seven hundred dollars, and later, other sums and favors were added to it. His brain was never idle, but usually his great poems were written for some special occasion: the Duchess Blanche, John of Gaunt's wife, died, and in her memory Chaucer wrote the "Book of the Duchess." Soon after John married again, and in the service of the new duchess

was one Mistress Swinford, the daughter, it is supposed, of Sir Paon de Rowet ; and her sister, Phillipa, was one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting. The two sisters must have been attractive women, although we know very little in detail of their histories, for after the death of Constance, John of Gaunt married Katherine Swinford, and Chaucer, at the queen's death, married Phillipa.

In 1372 Chaucer was sent to Italy on a commission for the king, and there we suppose he met the famous Italian poets, Petrarch and Bocaccio. The latter had written a famous book, "The Decameron," and it was from this Chaucer took the main idea, as well as the plots of several of his Canterbury Tales. When he returned new favors were bestowed upon him ; not only in money but some curious privileges such as a daily pitcher of wine from the king's table ! He was also given in charge of one of the ports, but while at court he had a cottage at Woodstock, and lived very comfortably. He must have been highly respected by the king, for he was frequently sent on private messages to different countries and he was even employed to arrange matters for the marriage of the Black Prince.

Matters fared comfortably enough until Edward's death, and John of Gaunt's absence in Portugal,

whither he had gone to attend the wedding of his daughter Phillipa with King John of Portugal, and for which occasion Chaucer wrote his lovely poem "The Flower and the Leaf."

The Duke of Gloucester was managing the government, and a parliament was held called "The Merciless." There were many disturbances among the people, and especially a great contest for the mayorship of the city of London. In this Chaucer, foolishly enough, took part. He should have been content, like his friend John Gower, to lead the life of a peaceful country gentleman, but entering into the contest he had to fly from England. Many of his associates followed him, and he generously supported them as long as his money lasted; but he came back to his native land almost penniless, and it is supposed he was for some time imprisoned in the Tower. You know that Richard II., son of the Black Prince, was deposed, and his cousin, Henry of Lancaster, having murdered him in Pontefract Castle, was made king. One of the first acts of the new reign, and the return of John of Gaunt, was to improve poor Chaucer's condition. Richard had built Westminster Hall, and Palace; and on the same grounds Chaucer rented a small dwelling where he went on with his literary work, the king granting him a pension. At this time he seems to

have been very much alone in the world. His old friend Gower lived on the other side of London Bridge in Southwark, close by the church of St. Saviour, where you may see his tomb to-day.

Chaucer had written many short poems, and at different times worked on his most famous book, the *Canterbury Tales*. Had he lived, these would undoubtedly have been finished and a number of stories added to those we have to-day; as it is they are among the most wonderful works of genius and imagination. Gower had at this time written "*The Speculum Meditantis*," the "*Vox Clamantis*" and "*The Confessio Amantis*." The latter is his only English work and the title signifies, "The Confession of Love." It is a curious book and the design is well known. One day while Gower was rowing on the Thames the king's barge approached, and Richard called Gower to come near; as he did so, the king begged him to "book some new thing" and the result was this "Confession of Love," in which Gower mixes up allegory, science, satire, in comic or pathetic tales; but they are none of them equal to Chaucer's simplest stories.

Chaucer wrote the "*Parsonnes Tale*" in his little house near Westminster Abbey. I think his gay spirits had quite given out. He had lived a busy

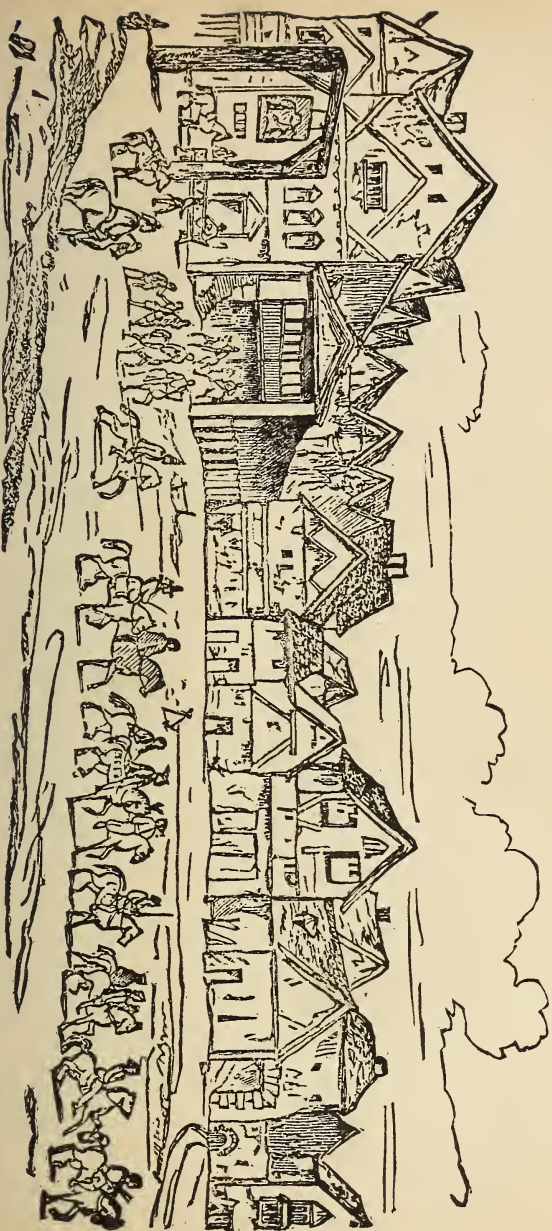
life and seen his friends die, one by one. He could remember great court scenes. Tournaments had been held on Cheapside in London, in his young days, where now only busy shops and offices are situated. He had little interest in the new court, for all the king's kind consideration. He wrote in those days a book for his son Lewis, called "Bread and Milk for Babes, or the Conclusions on the Astrolabe." There is certainly no loss of power in his last poems, in spite of his loneliness and old age. In 1400, one year and a day after he came to live at Westminster, he died, and was buried in the great Abbey, where, years after, a monument was erected to his name.

And now something remains to be told of his works, especially the greatest, "The Canterbury Tales." You must bear in mind that English Literature at this time, like the language, was much influenced by France; orthography was very different from that of the present day, and many words not known or used at present were in common use when Chaucer lived; words like ours were pronounced differently, and the accent on *e* and *a* was not like ours, the former being like *a*, the latter lengthened and giving a sound more as if *r* or *h* was added to it. To read the original Chaucer a glossary of words is really needed; but several more modern poets have

given fine modernized editions, of which we may recommend C. C. Clarke's, the collections by Horne, Browning and others, and a very simple and pretty rendering of the *Canterbury Tales* by Mrs. Haweis, called "The Golden Key to Chaucer."

"The *Canterbury Tales*" represent a party of Pilgrims to Canterbury who meet at an old Inn in Southwark, just across London Bridge.

Southwark was then, as it is now, a part of London, but green fields and lanes stood in the place of the shops and houses which crowd it to-day. The old Inn where Chaucer begins the "*Canterbury Tales*" stood down the high road not far from London Bridge, and only the other day, it, or the one erected on its site about the same time, was partially pulled down. It was built, as Inns of the day all were, around a courtyard of cobble-stones and pavement. The entrance doors were low and the storeys balconied as you see them in the illustration. Only one small portion of the building remains now, and before these words are printed it may have joined the rest, but it is well worth a visit. At one side warehouses stand; men and carts fill the courtyard where Chaucer's pilgrims in their varied costumes rode in and out five hundred years ago; just to the left, one side of an old house is standing; a worm-eaten balcony; some



Tabard Inn of Chaucer's day, built 1307.



broken-down doors and windows ; a narrow flight of steps, and a curious gabled roof, — these are all that remain of the Tabard Inn.

A little way beyond stands the old church, near which Gower spent his last days and in which he lies buried.

The Pilgrims were supposed to have assembled at this old Inn, to rest over night, before proceeding to Canterbury ; and Chaucer describes himself as meeting the party there. I will give you his words in the old English spoken in his day, and a modernized version, only changed, as you will see, according to the fashion of our time ; but by practice and a little knowledge of Chaucer's English you will come to prefer his poems in his own language. Their charm is really greater, when once you can understand how to pronounce the words, and the meaning of a few of his terms which we no longer use.

He begins the Prologue to the Tales by speaking of the lovely April weather ; and you must remember in all his poems the fact that in the Fourteenth century the seasons were somewhat later than at present. I am sure that in the April, when all that company met at Southwark, the trees and fields were very green and the pretty English hawthorne coming into flower.

He goes on to say ;

Byfel that in that season on a day.	It fell, that in that season on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay	In Southwark, at the Tabard, as I lay,
Ready to wenden on my pilgrimage,	Out of devotion did I then intend,
To Canterbury with full devout corage,	On Canterbury pilgrimage to wend.
At night was come into that hostelrie,	At night was come unto that hostelry
Wel nyne aud twènty in a companie,	Some nine and twenty in a company,
Of Sondry folk by adventure i-falle,	All sorts folks, chance comrades as I found,
In felawschipe and pilgryms were they alle,	And pilgrims all for Canterbury bound.
That toward Canterbury wol-den ryde.	Roomy the chambers, and the stakes wide,
And wel we weren esud atte berte ;	Right well our host did for his guests provide ;
And schortly whan the sonne was to reste,	And shortly ere the sun to rest had gone,
So hadde I spoken with hem every chon	I scraped acquaintance with them every one ;
That I was of here felawschipe anon.	One of their fellowship I claimed to be
	Who purposed riding in the company.

He then goes on to describe the company ; they consisted of the following people, and in reading the list remember their various differences in rank, as well as dress and general appearance, so that you

will have before your eyes a picture of the company, full of color, as it must have been, — the knights' and squires' rich scarlets contrasting with the friars' grey and brown, the frankleyn's comfortable air with that of the poverty of the ploughman and carpenter:

A knight, with his son, a young squire, and a yeoman of whom Chaucer says,

“And he was clad in coote and hood of grene ;”

a nun, or prioress, and in describing her he speaks of her great cleanliness at table, so that we can readily see it was considered quite a mark of distinction :

“Indeed I say ;  
She took her food in the most seemly way ;”

a monk ; a merchant, whose “Flemish Beaver” the poet refers to ; a clerk, or scholar, from Oxford, a poor man who had studied much and who rode a very thin horse ; a sergeant of the law ; a haberdasher, or shop-keeper ; a weaver, dyer, and embroider of tapestry ; a cook ; a shipman ; a doctor ; a good “Wife of Bath,” so called from living near Bath ; a parson, of whom Chaucer says,

“Riche he was of holy thought and werk —  
He was also a learned man a clerke ;”

a miller, and a Reeve a sort of bailiff ; a summoner\* and pard'ner ; and a manciple, or steward of the Temple, where the law students were instructed.

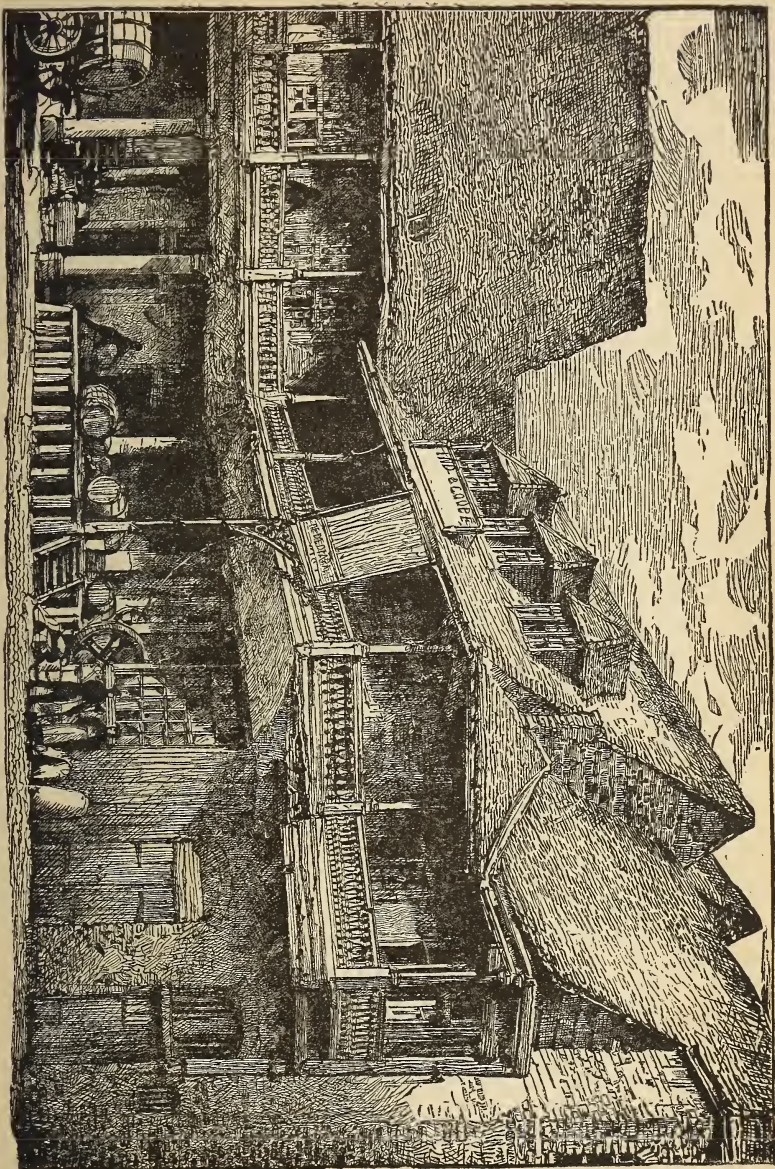
All these being assembled, they supped together pleasantly ; the host of the Tabard with them. This host was a very merry person, Chaucer says, and I don't doubt something quaint in the company impressed him. He proposed that, as the road to Canterbury was very long and tiresome, each one of the pilgrims should agree to tell two stories on the way ; and he whose tale was the best should have a fine supper at the Tabard on their return. To this, all the company cheerfully agreed, and the next day they rode forth. Can you not fancy them clattering out of the old Tabard courtyard and down the road towards Canterbury ? Heads here and there were put out of the windows as they passed. It must have been quite a fine sight for the neighborhood.

At a point often mentioned by old writers, "St. Thomas Watering," which was two miles on the way, the first story-teller was appointed. It was the knight, and he chose an old subject, "The Story of Palamon and Arcite."

Chaucer has taken the plot of this story from Boccaccio, of whose "Decameron" I have already told

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\* The Summoner called people before the courts when they had transgressed the law. These officers were universally detested.



Tabard Inn as it was in 1875; one small portion now remains.



you. It is one of the most beautiful of the "Canterbury Tales," and shows most strongly Chaucer's love of warlike glory, as well as the importance which used to be attached to love affairs. Although an old mythological story, and the characters from ancient times, Chaucer has mixed many of the fashions of his own day with old heathen practices ; but this was very common with writers of the Fourteenth century, just as painters of the same time represented Saints and Madonnas in the dress of their own period. I suppose they considered it the best way in which to interest their readers, whose historical and literary knowledge was generally too slight to make them appreciate stories entirely of the past.

The story is of two brothers, or cousins, Palamon and Arcite, rich young men of Thebes who were captured by Theseus, Duke of Athens, and imprisoned in a tower within his palace gates. Now the Duke had a very beautiful sister-in-law named "Emelye," and she, like all the English maidens of Chaucer's day, loved to walk out in the gardens. She frequently rose with the dawn so that she might feel the first beams of the rising sun. One morning, as poor Arcite was looking out of his prison window, he beheld her among the lovely, fragrant flowers ; and this is Chaucer's pretty description of her, which I will

give you first in his own words, and they are so nearly like our own that it seems a pity to spoil his quaint lines by "modernizing," as we call the changing of his verse and words into language of the present day :

"I clothed was sche fressh for to devise,  
Her yolwe (yellow) heer was browdid in a tresse  
Byhynde hire bak, a yerde lang, I gesse —  
And in the gardyn at the sonne's upriste  
Sche walketh up and down wheer as hire liste,  
She gathereth flowers partye whyte and reede (red)  
To made a certeyn gerlend for hire heede (head)  
And as an anngel hevenly sche song — "

Arcite on beholding Emelye falls deeply in love with her, and Palamon hearing him sigh, looks out of the window, and is at once overcome. The two dispute about it for a time, but their love is so very hopeless anger cannot last long. In time, however, Arcite was freed from prison on condition he would go and dwell in Thebes. There he was perpetually haunted by thoughts of Emelye, but poor Palamon, in his prison, sighed still more deeply.

Seven years had thus passed by, when by help of some kind friend, Palamon escaped from his prison, and hid himself in a forest. Meanwhile Arcite, believing himself so changed that no one in Athens would recognize him as the poor prisoner, had returned to Emelye's home, and there obtained the po-

sition of her page; calling himself Philostrate. In her service he proved himself so accomplished, so elegant, so useful in a thousand ways, that all the court wondered at him, and at the time of poor Palamon's escape he was in high favor. It chanced on this same day Arcite rode out to the forest. Chaucer tells us it was May-day. You can see how fond he is of the spring tide by always associating her blossom and freshness with his tales of love, or peace. Here is one extract which describes the sunrise at that season :

" The busy larke,  
The messenger of day,  
Saluteth in hire song  
The morwe gray.  
And fyry Phebus  
Ryseth up so brighte  
That al the orient  
Laugheth of the lighte."

" The busy lark,  
The messenger of day  
Saluteth in her song  
The morning grey —  
And fiery Phœbus  
Riseth up so bright  
That all the orient  
Laugheth for the light."

Is it not a pretty description of dancing sunbeams? The East, or "orient," smiling and dimpling as they rise, and spread over the green fields, and forest glades. Arcite, riding forth very joyously, intended to make himself a garland of woodbine and hawthorne leaves.\* He sang out in his gladness, but

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\* Also a medieral practice. In this way Chaucer constantly interests the reader of his own day.

finally, says the poet, grew sad and thoughtful, and cried out about Emelye ; upon this, Palamon, hiding near by, sprang out, and the two meeting for the first time in years, began to fight fiercely. Death might have come to one or both, had not a strange interruption occurred. The duke and the ladies of the court, who were out hunting, suddenly appeared. Their horses were reined in ; the duke cried out to the two men to put up their swords, and of course they were soon recognized as the two prisoners, Palamon and Arcite. Poor Palamon was most desperate of the two, for he was worn out with his sad imprisonment. He cried out :

"Sire what nedeth wordes mo, We heve the deth deserved both two, Two woful wrecches ben we two kaytyres That ben encombred oure owne lyves."	"Oh sire, why should we waste more words? For both of us deserve to die — Two woful wretches are we — two caitiffs — That are burdened by our own lives."
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The story of their hopeless love is told. The duke would have put them both to death but for the effect the tale had upon his queen and fair Emelye ; "for very womanhood" they began to weep. Emelye did not wish to marry any one, yet at the sight of these

two brave men, ready to die for her, she could not but have been moved — and here is another proof of the power of women in Chaucer's day. Their favor was considered quite enough to encourage men to all sorts of bravery and peril, and Palamon and Arcite were spared death because of their sad love story. The result was, that it was agreed in a year's time each should bring to a great tournament one hundred armed knights, and try to win the fair, the "fresh, fair Emelye" by skill at arms.

The day came ; Chaucer's description of the tournament field and the temples to Venus, Saturn and Diana, is wonderful.

Kings and princes were present —

" With Arcita

The gret Emetrius, the king of  
Inde,

Upon a steede bay, trapped in  
steel

Covered with cloth of gold  
dyapred wel —

Cam rydyng lyk the God of  
Armes, Mars.

His coote armour was of a  
cloth of Tars

Cowched of perlys whyte, round  
and grete.

His sadil was of brend gold  
newe bete ;

" With Sir Arcite

Rode great Emetrius, king of  
India,

A bay horse with steel hous-  
ings as I've heard,

Covered with cloth of gold well  
diapered

Came riding on like Mars, the  
God of wrath —

His Tabard coat was of a Tar-  
sus cloth,

Inlaid with great white pearls.  
His saddle too,

Was all of beaten gold, bur-  
nished anew —

A mantlelet upon his schuldre hangyng	A mantle round about his shoulders spread
Bret ful of rubies reed as fir sparclyng	Sparkling like fire was full of rubies red.
His crisp her lik rynges was iroune	His yellow locks about his fore- head run
And that was yalwe and gliter- yng as the sonne."	In crisp short curls that glitter like the sun."

In further description he goes on to say :

"Ne who sat first ne last upon the deys	"Who at the dais had the up- per place
What ladies fayrest ben or best dan or syng,	What ladies were the fairest 'mong the fair,
Or which of hem can dance best or sing,	Which danced or sang the best of all were there,
Ne who mos felyngly speketh of love,	Who could most tenderly de- claim of love,
What hawkes sitten on the perche above,	What kind of hawks sat on the perch above —
What houndes lyen on the floor adown."	What sort of hounds, lay on the floor below."

Here we have, you see, a picture of a scene in Chaucer's day. The daïs, on which the most distinguished people were assembled by special invitation, the fair ladies, the dancing and singing, the perch with hawks upon it, and the group of hounds—all belong to the court and times of Edward III, and were introduced into an ancient story to give it a familiar, pleasant air, for the readers of his own day.

The tilt began ; Arcite had placed himself under Saturn's care, and Palamon under that of Venus, while pretty Emelye had asked of Diana that neither might win her ; but Arcite, amidst a tumultuous applause, came out victorious ; Emily was his ! Just as he was riding up towards her, however, he fell and was mortally wounded ! They bore him into the palace, dying — by this time Emelye's heart was quite lost to him, and one of the most pathetic scenes in Chaucer's verse is the death-bed of the gallant knight. Arcite, with Emelye and Palamon beside him, speaks : —

“Allas the woo ! alas the peynes stronge That I for you have suffered, and so long ! Allas the deth ! Allas myn Emelyne ! Allas departyng of our com- paignye ! Allas myn herter queen ! Allas my wyf ! My hertes lady — Endere of my life ! What is this world ! What asken men to have !”	“Alas the woe — alas the trials strong That I for you have borne — and ah ! so long — Alas to die ! Alas my Eme- lye ! Alas that we so soon part com- pany ! Alas my heart's one Queen — Alas my wife ! Ah my heart's lady, ender of my life — What is this world — what do men yearn to have !”
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He then commends Palamon to her kind love, and and dies, murmuring “Emelye.” The tale ends finally with the marriage of Emelye and Palamon.

This is a fair specimen of the narrative part, or plot, of Chaucer's verse.

Other stories, of course, are told by the Pilgrims journeying along. The clerk tells the famous story of Griselda the beggar maiden who married a prince, and was so humble and obedient a wife that her name, ever since, is used to describe patent submission.

Some moral is always intended, but the language is frequently what we of to-day would consider very coarse; but in Chaucer's time, there was a great lack of delicacy, even in common speech, and in order to give variety to his tales, he introduces vulgar characters, who of course tell vulgar tales, which, however, are the least interesting or intelligible to us, and were only applicable to his own times. The great charm of Chaucer's verse is his power of description, especially when speaking of nature; of summer time; of the fall or flower. Take these three lines for example, in the *Frankleyn's Tale*.

"And this was on the sixte morne (morning) of May  
Which May had peynted with his soft schowres  
This gardyn full of leves and of flourers."

I leave his words, as they can readily be understood and they are too pretty to change into more modern verse.

Here is the description of Griselda, the poor beggar maiden :

But though this mayden tender were of age, Yet in the brest of her virgin- ite There was enclosed rype and sad corrage, And in gret reverence and char- ite Hir olde pore fader fostered sche, A fewe scheep, spynning, on the feld sche kepte. Sche wolde not ben ydel til sche slepte. • • • and ay sche kept hir fadres lif on lofte With every obeissance and dil- igence What child may so to fadres reverense.	But though this maiden was as yet so young, Under her girlish innocence there lay, A brave and serious spirit ever strong, And with good heart she la- bored day by day, To tend and help her father poor and grey — Some sheep, while spinning, in the fields she kept, For never was she idle till she slept. • • • • • Keeping her father with untir- ing care And all obedience and all dili- gence That child can give to filial rev- erence.*
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“The Canterbury Tales” were never finished. As I told you Chaucer began them late in his life, and he had, no doubt, a very fine plan for their continuing after the pilgrims reached Canterbury and turned their faces homeward again, but he left them incom-

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\* Modernized by Mrs. Haweis.

plete, and no imitators who have tried to finish them have been successful.

And now when you read Chaucer's sweet and flowing verse try to fancy yourself in the England of his day ; one of his Canterbury Pilgrims supping at the Tabard Inn. Fill your mind with the look of *his* England ; try to fancy yourself walking with him among the lanes and past the blooming hedgerows of which he tells us ; then you will begin to appreciate what his charm really is ; how true to nature are all his descriptions ; how beautiful his ideas ; how wonderful his character drawing. Beyond this, remember that to Chaucer, more than to any one person, we owe the English Language as we have it to-day, for it was he who combined the French and English words in use, so that their meaning became clearer ; he who really constructed, in a certain sense, a permanent English tongue in which all poets could write. Changes, of course, have been made, but his was the real foundation, and knowing all this, and reading his lovely verses can you wonder Geoffrey Chaucer is called the "Father of English Poetry?"

LIST OF CHAUCER'S WORKS.

The Canterbury Tales.

Flower and the Leaf.

'Troilous and Creiside.

The Romaunt of the Rose.

The Book of the Duchess.

Compleynte to Pity.

Parliament of Foules.

Annelida and Arcite.

Boece — The Former Age.

Lines to Scrivener.

Legende of Good Women.

Compleynte of Venue.

Truth — Modes of God.

The Treatise on the Astrolabe.

CONTEMPORARIES OF CHAUCER.

JOHN GOWER. born in Kent 1328, died in Southwark, London, 1408. He wrote several long poems, three of which are well known. The "Vox Clamantis;" or "The Voice of Crying;" the "Confessio Amantis;" or "Confession of a Lover," and the "Speculum Meditantis;" or the "Thoughts of a Meditator."

WILLIAM LANGLAND, born at Shipton, under Myclewood, author of a poem "The Vision of Piers Plowman." In this poem Langland tells the story of a dream in which he saw the condition of England and various people.

SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE, a famous traveler who journeyed between 1322 and 1352 in the East and wrote his travels in French and Latin as well as in English.

JOHN WICKLIF, born in Yorkshire, in 1324. A Master or Warden of Balliol College at Oxford. He made a translation of the Bible and wrote on various religious subjects.

RALPH STRODE, a Dominican monk of Jedburgh Abbey. He wrote a great deal in Latin and English, on various topics, but few are now of special interest.

RICHARD AUGERVYLE, known as Richard of Bury, born in 1281; died 1344. Appointed tutor to Prince Edward, afterwards King Edward III. He became Bishop of Durham, and exercised his power well, giving much in charities and instructing all whom he could. His chief work was a Latin Treatise on the love of books and how to use them, entitled, "*Philobiblon*." In this a famous paragraph is the following:

"O books, ye only are liberal and free who pay tribute to all who ask it, and enfranchise all who serve you faithfully!"

He left a large library.

THOMAS BRADWARDINE, born 1290; died 1340. He wrote on scientific subjects and was called the "Profound Doctor." Chaucer refers to him in the Nun's Priest's Tale, in the "Canterbury Tales."

JOHN OF FORDREAU, wrote a chronicle of Scotland from the Flood to 1360.

JOHN OF TOOKELOW, HENRY OF BLANEFORD, and ROBERT OF AVESBURY, compiled different annals of English History, with extracts from documents, letters etc.

RALPH HIGDEN wrote a famous book called the "Polychronicon," which was the chronicle of different periods. It was almost a universal history. He is supposed to be the author of the Miracle Plays acted in Chester during the Fourteenth century. He died in 1363.

JOHN OF SADDSDEN, the physician to Edward III, wrote on the practice of physic. Some parts of his work are very amusing; the remedies given for different diseases reading as if from Fairy Tales.

## II.

### THE DAYS OF SPENSER.

“Merry England”—Sir Philip Sidney—Ponsonby’s—Spenser’s Secretaryship—*The Faery Queen*—Burial in Westminster Abbey.

THE AGE of Chaucer ended early in the Fifteenth century. The period of which I wish now to tell you began more than one hundred years later. I must take for granted that you know your English History, and what kings and queens had governed England since the death of Chaucer. When we reach Queen Elizabeth’s day, in 1550, we find what was known as “Merry England.” Everything had altered, even before Elizabeth came to the throne.

Houses were finer, London grown into a more prosperous city ; lords and ladies, peasants and yeomen, all lived in greater comfort ; and learning was

much more general. Let us fancy a great manor house where Queen Elizabeth and her ladies-in-waiting and some of her esquires, pages, and servants were entertained for a week of feasting and splendor. I was in one such the other day ; many pieces of the very furniture used in the Sixteenth century remain ; the great banqueting-hall, as in the days of Chaucer, was there, unchanged in form, though many comforts and elegancies had been added. At the upper end a splendid stair-case which led up and across a sort of gallery where tapestries and rich hangings were draped, sometimes swords crossed and helmets hung. The upper chambers were furnished in rather stiff, heavily carved furniture. A rich bed, in which the queen had slept three nights, had four massive posts and a rich canopy of satin ; stoves and fire-places were general ; rich carpetings, and windows with innumerable panes of glass.

In the matter of social etiquette a great advance had been made. Exquisite silver and gold trenchers and salvers were used, and knives and forks of very elaborate description. One of these which I saw, used by royal fingers, had such heavy carving on the handle I wonder how it ever could have been used. In the main hall, the dining-table was spread for banquets, but frequently smaller rooms were used for

meals in private ; and domestic life was far more sociable and comfortable than when Chaucer's pilgrims ate in such rude fashion at the Tabard Inn. With all these comforts, the utmost extravagance and display had come in. Fancy this very hall of which I speak. The queen was entertained by such splendors and merry-making, that to read of them now we think they



LADY OF RANK AND COUNTRYWOMAN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH'S TIME.

could hardly have existed out of fairyland. The greatest poets in the land composed verses and plays and allegories for the occasion. Hundreds of people were engaged to perform the various parts ; and all the park was transformed into a kind of enchanted country. If there was a lake, you might see nymphs and fairies about it who, when the queen approached,

recited verses in her honor, sang carols, or laid garlands at her feet. Through the woods strange characters roamed, dressed in every imaginable costume. They had all something to do for the queen's entertainment — at one side a mimic battle ; at another a kind of allegory, performed in pantomime, while some person stood by to explain its meaning ; on the lawns, dancers, musicians, minstrels appeared, jugglers and gymnasts, while the richest cloths were spread about for the queen and her ladies to walk upon. When night came, the whole place would be illuminated ; within, suppers and dancing, without, some sort of revel kept up ; all day long the gates were being opened to fresh arrivals, some new performer, some distinguished guest ; at night one set of people was kept up preparing for the next day's display. And what kind of ladies and gentlemen were they in the court ? They certainly make a great part of the picture. No description I could give would present an idea of the magnificence of their costumes. The queen's wardrobe contained over three thousand dresses. These were of silks and satins and velvets of every imaginable hue, made with quilted skirts, long, pointed waists, and a high ruff in the neck. Of course her ladies dressed in keeping ; and the gentlemen of the court were so fine about their dress, with

their satin cloaks, jeweled vests, and puffed sleeves, their silk hose and buckled shoes, that many writers made sport of them. Fancy all this fine assemblage



at Whitehall in London, or at some earl's country-seat. The queen, glittering all over with gems, and dressed in rustling green satin, walks about, followed by courtiers ready to bow down and do her homage. They make merry, they laugh, and jest, and flatter, because the queen likes it; while, far off, out of hearing, in the Tower, death-warrants are so often

GENTLEMAN OF ELIZABETH'S TIME. being given out. One of the prisoners of that day said he wondered why any one cared to live; to him there was only sadness in that rich, merry-making England.

Of course, with all this, had come a great increase of learning.

The ladies of the queen's court were very clever. They knew Latin and Greek and French, and some

science, and they read a great deal of poetry. The principal reason for this was that *printing* had been introduced into England by one William Caxton about 1480. The first books were printed on thin, yellowish paper, and Caxton wrote many of them himself ; but among the first was an edition of the Canterbury Tales. He had to work hard enough, and sometimes he made mistakes. For instance, when his first edition of Chaucer appeared, a gentleman called upon him and said it was not like the *MS.* copy his father had ; and so poor Caxton borrowed the correct version and had to begin all over again. But now writers sprang up on every side. In the reign of Henry VIII. the Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas More were famous. I wish that in this space I could tell their story. They both met the same sad fate at the Tower, and England waited long before such a Christian gentleman, such a scholar, such a man, as Sir Thomas More was known again. One little incident will show you what he was. While he was in the Tower his wife came and begged of him to do all the king required, and come back to court, nearer to royal favor and enjoyment.

“Dear Alice,” More answered, “I am as near my God and Heaven in this dungeon as at court, so I will bide here.”

Schools and colleges were flourishing ; literature be-

came fashionable ; and at court learning was greatly encouraged. But the style of the day was extravagant. How could it be otherwise when, on all sides, display, flattery, fine speeches, pretty airs and graces, were so much admired ? There was a writer named John Lyly or Lillie, whose works were much sought after ; his style was very high-flown and what we, today, would call stilted. He wrote a book called “ Euphues,” from which we take the word “ Euphuism,” and this was

full of phrases in his peculiar, grandiose manner.



ELIZABETHAN RUFF.

Lyly's books became all the fashion ; and a writer who edited his works after his death says “ All our ladies were then his schollers, and that Beautie in court who could not parley Euphueisms

was as little regarded as shee which now there speaks not french.”

In London a man called Ponsonby kept a book-shop in the Strand. It was a queer little place. The streets were often narrow then, even in London ; the shops low, and the first story projected over the entrance ; the roofs were peaked, the windows, whether jutting out or bow-shaped, had small panes of glass.

Ponsonby was a great publisher in his day. Many writers brought him their works, and if you had gone into his shop you would have found the writings of a whole band of poets ; but of these let us consider first three — all friends, all well-known today : Sir Philip Sidney, Walter Raleigh, and last, but greatest poet, Edmund Spenser.

I hardly know what to tell you first of Sir Philip Sidney. He was the idol of the nation in Elizabeth's day. Everybody loved him, everybody respected him — a brave, generous, frank-hearted gentleman, who had much more to recommend him to our notice to-day than his fine dress and noble, manly, young face. No flattery seemed to touch his sweet, frank nature. No prosperity made him forget the sufferings of others. His home was at Penshurst, or Milton, where he lived with his beautiful sister Mary, the Countess of Pembroke ; but he was much in London, where all the court worshipped him. Down at Penshurst, however, Sir Philip wrote his famous book, "The Arcadia," for the special entertainment of his beloved sister. I hardly think you would find it interesting reading to-day except for the sake of Sir Philip. The style was too much according to the fashion of the times ; but the idea Sir Philip had in writing it was very beautiful.

You see the honest, true-hearted gentleman, tired of

the shows and stateiy frivolities of court life. The insincerity wearied him. When he turned his back upon it all, and found himself in his peaceful country home, there came to him some thought of a place which a man might find on God's wide, fair earth, where only goodness and happiness were known ; and so he wrote "Arcadia." It describes an Island where all the laws were just, and all the people happy. Today, when we speak of any very happy, beautiful life, we say it is "Arcadian." Sir Philip Sidney's life was very wonderful in those days. There never was a shadow upon it. He befriended every one who needed his help ; he loved his friends devotedly. When at last he left England to join the army in Holland, every one grieved bitterly. How much more so, when, in the very flower of his youth, in 1586, at the age of thirty-two, he died, wounded fatally in battle. The last act of his life was a generous one. Lying on the field, wounded mortally, and suffering from a feverish thirst, he was given a cup of water ; but, at that moment, he heard a poor, dying soldier begging faintly for drink. "Give it to him," Sidney whispered, "he needs it more than I."

I am sure Sidney would have been a great poet had he lived longer. Here is one of his verses :

“ Come sleep, oh sleep, the certain knot of peace,  
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,  
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,  
The indifferent judge between the high and low.  
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease  
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw ;  
O make in me those civil wars to cease ;  
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so. ”

Among Sidney's friends was Sir Walter Raleigh. You know his history as a brave adventurer, but he was also one of the poets and prose writers of his day. What a contrast he makes to Sidney ! No less a gentleman in one way, but a gay, bold-hearted man, not knowing fear, ready to laugh at fate. He was born in 1552, and when very young, went to Oxford College. Soon after, he became distinguished at court. You know how he laid down his cloak for Elizabeth to walk upon. This was very like him, although I have no doubt fifty other men in England would have done the same. Raleigh used to visit Sir Philip at Penshurst. The two men were nearly the same age, and both wrote and enjoyed each other's writings generously ; but the time came when, for political reasons, he was cast into the Tower. He was released at different times. Finally, under James I. in 1618, he was beheaded. In the Tower he wrote the *History of the World* ; and we have a collection of his poems, showing what a man of genius and imagination he must have

been, certainly not appreciated in those days of tyranny. He, like Sidney, liked to turn his thoughts from the town when he wrote. Here are two verses from his "Country Recreations":

"Abused mortal, did you know  
Where joy, heart's-ease, and comfort grow,  
You'd scorn proud towers,  
And seek them in these bowers ;  
Where winds, perhaps, our woods may sometimes shake,  
But blustering care could never tempest make,  
Nor murmurs e'er come nigh us,  
Saving of fountains that glide by us.

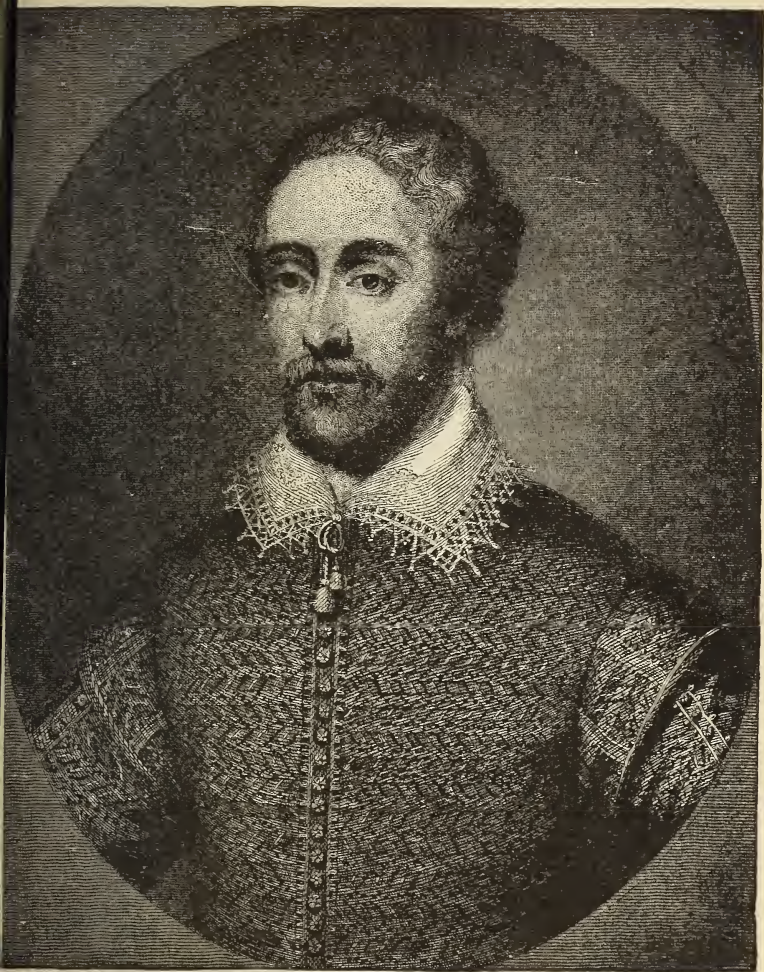
. . . . .

Blest, silent groves, O, may ye be  
Forever mirth's best nursery !  
May pure contents  
Forever pitch their tents  
Upon these downs, these meads, these wells, these mountains  
And peace still slumber by these purling fountains,  
Which we may, every year,  
Find when we come a-fishing here."

At Cambridge University in England in the year 1569, a young man of sixteen, from London, was entered as a "sizar," or one of the humblest class of students. He was poor, and obliged, as all sizars were, to work his way; but it was not long before he became very popular. Gabriel Harvey, a distinguished scholar, noticed him, and took him into his intimate friendship. The young sizar began to make verses, and showed so much ability that all Cambridge learned

to know his name. It is now famous all the world over, for this was EDMUND SPENSER, the author of the "*Faery Queen*." From college Spenser went to visit some country relations, but Harvey sent a note begging him to come down to London. He was ready enough to return to his native place, and while there Harvey introduced him to Sir Philip Sidney. From the very first hour of their meeting, the two men were sworn friends. Spenser visited Sidney and his lovely sister at Penshurst. Like Sidney, he wrote best when he turned away from town life and one of his earliest works, "The Shepherd's Calendar," is a rural, or country poem dedicated to his dear Sidney. I can easily picture the friends enjoying the lovely English country life together ; perhaps Raleigh sometimes joined them. In those days literature was young enough to make authors cling to each other. They discussed poetry and the various styles of versifying. Sidney and Spenser had some idea of doing away with all *rhymes* in poetry, but they fortunately gave it up.

At Penshurst Sidney and his guests led a very pleasant life. In those days the country gentlemen rode out, went hawking, fishing and shooting. We can easily picture Spenser and Sidney riding out of the gates on a fine summer morning. A page stands by in a fantastic dress of red and blue, his long plumed



Edmund Spenser.



hat in his hand. Spenser's dress is soberer, grayer than Sidney's ; the latter is like a beautiful picture in his rich velvets and embroideries, Picture him bending a moment to speak to the page ; the sweet, thoughtful friend waiting near by ; all the rich English country with its many tints of green, its pretty blossoms, its ripe, clustering hedge-rows, about them. A moment more and they gallop out of the court-yard, down a lane, where all the fragrances of summer time reach them. Can you fancy them coming home, later in the day, to the evening meal in the castle hall, where the beautiful Lady Pembroke joined them, where they discussed all the topics both men loved ? I do not wonder Spenser's recollections of Penshurst Castle were so sweet and tender that, when Sidney was dead, his very verses seemed to weep.

Later, Spenser went to Ireland as secretary of Lord Grey, the Lord Deputy ; and in 1586, when he was thirty-four, he received a grant of some lands which the queen had taken from an Irish gentleman. He took up his abode here, at Kilcolman Castle, near Doneraile, of which only ruins can be seen today. While there, he began his great work, *The Faery Queen*. I told you how the taste of the day was for everything fanciful, allegorical, and extravagant. Naturally, Spenser fell into this popular style. When he planned

his poem, he thought of knights and ladies, fairies and enchanters, allegorical personages, lions spell-bound, and endowed with reasoning powers, monsters, serpents, wicked nymphs and dryads, for his characters ; but he mingled them in some confusion, and while we can but be fascinated by his beautiful verse, the design is a little wearisome. You must, however, in reading "The Faery Queen," forget the story. Take up one or two of the beautiful characters — the sweet Lady Una, Belphebe, or Britomart, — and see how wonderfully he describes them. We have to admire him, I think, newly on every page. There is such a flow of beautiful, harmonious words, the thoughts and ideas are so fine, and the occasional coarseness is due to the time in which he lived, when people in the very best society and of the highest education frequently used the coarsest terms in speech or composition.

Spenser had written the first three books of the "Faery Queen" when Raleigh came to visit him. Spenser rather timidly told Raleigh of his work, and while they sat upon the lawn of Kilcolman, he read him aloud so much as he had written. Raleigh was perfectly delighted. In his headlong, impetuous fashion, he hurried back to London, and made his way to the queen. At that time he was in high favor. Can't

you imagine him, full of generous zeal for his friend, hastening into the queen's presence, so ready to burst forth on some subject that Elizabeth quickly enough asked him what news he brought?

O, he had found a poet — *such* a poet — Master Edmund Spenser, who was already known somewhat in the young literary world, but he was doing new wonders : he ought to come to London ! Her Majesty's court was the place for such a genius ! So Raleigh held forth for some time. The result was that Spenser was summoned to London, and there he found his way down to old Ponsonby's shop. The publisher gladly undertook to have the three books of the "Faery Queen" printed. Only yesterday I was looking at the first edition brought out by Ponsonby, while Spenser was making one of the queen's courtiers. It is very well printed, on the thin paper of the day ; the title-page is ornamented most elaborately. A fine copy was bound to present to the queen, whom Spenser had called "Gloriana" in his poem. She received it very graciously, and promised the poet fifty pounds, but her treasurer, thinking it too much, delayed the payment ; and Spenser wrote a few satirical lines, whereupon the money was instantly paid to him.

Ponsonby's shop, down in "Flete Street," at 'the "Sign of the Hand and Starre," was well patronized

by purchasers of Spenser's new poem. The poet himself returned to Ireland and married, happily, it is believed, though of his wife Elizabeth we know little. He wrote the "Epithalamium" in honor of his marriage; and it is one of the most exquisite works of his rare genius. He also wrote more upon the Faery Queen, and "Colin Clout's come home again;" but in 1599 misfortune befel him. The Irish peasantry, incensed by the persecutions and oppressions they were suffering, revolted, and Spenser's home was burned, his infant child perishing in the flames. He escaped with his wife to London, but there poverty and despair seemed to weigh him down. Many of his biographers think he was in a starving condition when he died, in King Street, Westminster, January 16th, 1599. I think this hardly likely to be the case; we know that he was very poor; that he died, grieved and wearied at heart. Friends paid his funeral expenses, and he lies buried next to Chaucer in Westminster Abbey.

In the "Faery Queen" Spenser is best known to-day. His idea was to represent, in the twelve books twelve "moral virtues," and they can only be properly appreciated when the reader fancies himself back in Spenser's time; buying the volume of old Ponsonby; living among Elizabeth's gay courtiers; and, moreover, having so few books to read that Spenser's long de-

scription, detailed pictures, and explanations seem in no way wearisome. Every character in the "Fairy Queen" had a special meaning; the Knight of the Red Cross signifies Holiness; Una meant Purity.

UNA AND THE RED-CROSS KNIGHT.

A gentle knight was pricking on the plain,  
Yclad in mighty arms and silver shield,  
Wherein old dints of deep wounds did remain,  
The cruel marks of many a bloody field;  
Yet arms, till that time, did he never wield:  
His angry steed did chide his foaming bit,  
As much disdainng to the curb to yield;  
Full jolly knight he seemed, and fair did sit,  
As one for knightly jousts and fierce encounters fit.

And on his breast a bloody cross he bore,  
The dear remembrance of his dying Lord,  
For whose sweet sake that glorious badge he wore,  
And dead, as living, ever him adored:  
Upon his shield the like was also scored,  
For sovereign hope, which in his help he had:  
Right faithful true he was in deed and word,  
But of his cheer did seem too solemn sad:  
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

Upon a great adventure he was bound,  
That greatest Gloriana to him gave,  
(That greatest, glorious queen of fairy-land)  
To win him worship, and her grace to have,  
Which of all earthly things he most did crave;  
And ever, as he rode, his heart did yearn  
To prove his puissance in battle brave  
Upon his foe, and his new force to learn;  
Upon his foe, a dragon horrible and stern.

A lovely lady rode him fair beside  
Upon a lowly ass more white than snow;  
Yet she much whiter, but the same did hide  
Under a veil that wimpled was full low,  
And over all a black stole she did throw,  
As one that inly mourned: so was she sad,  
And heavy sat upon her palfrey slow;  
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,  
And by her in a line a milk-white lamb she led.

I have told you the stories of these three poets, Spenser, Raleigh, and Sidney; but a whole band of other names should be included among the poets who belong to Elizabeth's era. Spenser assuredly is first; Ben Jonson and some few others we shall come to, among the great *dramatists* of the day. Southwell would, undoubtedly, have been one of the greatest poets of the sixteenth century but for his cruel captivity in the Tower. He was a Roman Catholic priest, and as such arrested, flung into prison, tortured on the rack, and finally beheaded.

With such a life, how could he write of "Merry England?" His verses on death and on immortality are very beautiful. While Spenser and Sidney show us the gay, theatrical, or sentimental life of the day, poets like Robert Southwell show us the darker side of life under the Tudors.

Beside these names, come others. The fair sister

of Sidney, upon whose tomb Ben Jonson wrote the following famous lines :

“ Underneath this sable hearse,  
Lies the subject of all verse,  
Sidney’s sister ! Pembroke’s mother !  
Death, ere thou hast slain another,  
Fair, and learned, and good as she,  
Time shall throw his dart at thee ! ”

The two brothers Fletcher, Giles and Phineas, both clergymen and poets of a high type, Wotton, Fairfax, Overbury, Drummond, all these names, with many others, belong to the band of singers, or “ makers of verses,” who have given Queen Elizabeth’s reign part of its literary glory. Drummond was a Scotch gentleman, of whom, in the next chapter, there will be something to say. He lived at Hawthornden, a beautiful place in Scotland, and wrote his poems chiefly out of doors, sitting on an old bench directly in front of the cave Robert the Bruce once used as a hiding-place. Drummond died in 1649, at the age of fifty.

In the next chapter the king of all poetry, the first, the greatest genius the world has ever known, shall be presented to you. His very name makes one feel like standing still for some gesture of reverence and homage. Do you not know it well ?

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

EDMUND SPENSER. 1553 — 1599.

LIST OF SPENSER'S WORKS.

The Faery Queen.

Epithalamium.

The Ruins of Time.

Visions, and the Fate of the Butterfly.

Daphnaida.

Colin Clout's Come Home Again.

Amorati, or Sonnets.

Prothalamion.

Thymus.

The Shepherd's Calendar.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY. 1554 — 1586. "The Arcadia;" "The Defence of Poesie;" "Sonnets."

SIR WALTER RALEIGH. 1552 — 1618. Works: "The History of the World" (prose); "The Country Recreations;" "Philidas' Love Call;" "The Silent Lover;" "The Shepherd's Description of Love."

GABRIEL HARVEY. 1545 — 1630. Works: "Letters and Sonnets."

FULKE GREVILLE (Lord Brooke); 1564 — 1628. Works: Prose and Verse. Several didactic poems; "A Treatise of Human Learning;" "A Treatise of Monarchy;" "A Treatise of Religion;" "An Inquisition upon Fame and Honor." Two tragedies, "Alaham," and "Mustapha." "Life of Sidney."

THOMAS SACKVILLE (Earl of Dorset and Lord High Treas-

urer of England). 1536—1608. Works: "The Mirror for Magistrates" (with Baldwin and Ferrers).

GEORGE FERRERS. 1512—1599. Wrote six chronicles in verse for "The Mirror for Magistrates."

WILLIAM BALDWIN. "A Treatise on Moral Philosophy;" "The Canticles or Ballads of Solomon;" "The Use of Adages, Similes and Proverbs;" "Beware the Cat."

WILLIAM WARNER. 1558—1609. Works: "Albion's England," a narrative poem.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL. 1590—1695. Poems; "St. Peter's Complaint;" "Mary Magdalene's Tears."

SAMUEL DANIEL. 1562—1619. Works: "The Queen's Arcadia;" "The Tragedy of Cleopatra." "The Tragedy of Philotes;" "Hymen's Triumph;" "Twelve Goddesses;" "Musophilus;" Numerous Sonnets. (Prose): "History of England," and "History of Civil Wars."

MICHAEL DRAYTON. 1563—1631. Works: "Poly-albion:" (Antiquities of Britain in verse); "The Barons' Wars;" "England's Heroical Epistles;" "The Shepherd's Garland;" etc., etc.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 1581—1613. A noted wit, and author of two didactic poems: "The Wife," and "The Choice of a Wife." Wrote in prose.

SIR HENRY WOTTON 1568 1639. — Works: "The State of Christendom;" "Elements of Architecture;" etc. etc.

(Barnes and Bamfield wrote various madrigals, sonnets, odes, etc. Joshua Sylvester wrote poems and sonnets of medium value. Translated from the French of Du Bartas. William Browne: wrote pastorals. Samuel Rowlands, various poems.)

GILES and PHINEAS FLETCHER. 1588—1623, 1584—1650. Giles' chief poem, "Christ's Victory and Triumph in Heaven and Earth over and after Death. PHINEAS' chief works The Locusts or Appollyonists." "The Purple Island."

GEORGE HERBERT. 1593—1632. Works: "The Temple," A Priest to the Temple."

WILLIAM DRUMMOND of Hawthornden. 1625—1649. Works best known: "The River of Forth Feasting." "The Praise of a Solitary Life."

WILLIAM ALEXANDER, Earl of Stirling. 1580—1640. Various tragedies and poems.

### III.

#### THE EARLY DRAMA AND DRAMATISTS.

Inn-Yard Theatres — The First Tragedy — The First Theatre  
— Kit Marlowe — At Blackfriars.

I HAVE concluded that before stepping with you into the days of Shakespeare it is needful to tell you somewhat of the various theatrical performances, the religious plays and mysteries, of some of which, notably those pageants in honor of Queen Elizabeth, I spoke in the last chapter, and which in reality paved the way for those great dramatic works of the reign, which to this day, are performed with little or no alteration.

Before the invention of printing, few people among the lower classes could read; and therefore when, in a little town, it was announced that a representation

of certain parts of scripture history would be given, you can imagine how eagerly the people flocked to see it. These representations were known by different names — “mysteries,” “miracle plays,” “moralities,” etc., — and frequently clergymen themselves took part. Sometimes a herald or crier would go through the town giving notice when and where and how the performance was to take place ; if it rained, they waited till the next fine day, for the play was usually given in the open air, a sort of platform being erected for the players, who were frequently obliged, on coming before the audience, to explain who they were ; for, of course, at that early day, there could be no theatrical scenery, or what are now known as “stage accessories” to help them.

Although it may seem, now, that an audience must have been rather dull if it could be amused by such performances, the spectators in those times were in reality very quick-witted, and the fact of so much being left to the imagination may have sharpened their minds.

Fancy yourself sitting on one of those rough benches in a village street crowded with people of Henry the Seventh’s day. All eyes are eagerly strained towards the little platform : the figure of an old man appears ; there is so little in his dress or man-

ner to indicate who he is, that either he himself, or the person stationed just below for that purpose, has to announce that he is "Moses" or "Pharao" or "Herod" as the case may be. He goes through certain performances, the other characters joining in as they are needed to tell his story. Meanwhile the spectator has to use all his mind to rouse his imagination and fill up the picture.

Certain wooden figures were always kept by the performers in these "mysteries," as well as in the pageants, and played an important part in the Spectacle. It took very little to produce an effect upon these willing audiences ; for example, a huge wooden monster with an enormous mouth signified "hell ;" and a favorite character in these early performances, whether play or pageant, was "the devil," who was often represented piling up fire in the mouth of the monster ; and I have just been looking at a curious old account-book which records the expenses of a certain pageant ; and among other items, "twelve shillings paid to the devil for keeping up hell-fyre."

Angels with golden wings were favorite characters, and it is surprising how ingenious some of the devices were. On one occasion, when Anne of Bohemia rode through the city of London, one of the an-

gels appeared to fly down from a neighboring wall, and present the young queen with a cup of wine. Cheapside in London was a famous scene for these pageants, and no expense was spared in their preparation by the merchants and rich citizens who lived in that street. Not only were scripture subjects popular, but the heroes and heroines of mythology played a conspicuous part. When Anne Boleyn rode in triumph through London, a great pageant was given in her honor, and the principal characters were Venus, Pallas, and Juno, who presented the queen with a golden apple, divided into three parts to signify Wisdom, Riches, and Felicity.

Although the people had been accustomed to shows and pageants of this kind since a very early date, it had not occurred to any writer to compose a play more like real life, until the middle of the Sixteenth century; but, as I told you in the last chapter, whatever was fanciful and unreal seemed to please the people better, and you can understand how, with no regular theatre for their performances, the scriptural and mythological subjects were more easily acted and more entertaining than real life.

However, a comedy was finally written by one Nicolas Udall, master of Westminster School, in 1551. The name of this play was *Ralph Royster Doyster*,

and I fear you would find it very stupid if it were performed to-day. The characters were all taken from low life, and, as its title suggests, the humor was of the most boisterous description.

Meanwhile, Queen Elizabeth had come to the throne. You know how fond she was of all manner of shows and representations, so you can understand how readily she encouraged the new plays and players. Her taste was followed by the court ; and not only had all the leading noblemen a troupe of players for their own amusement and the queen's diversion, but numerous strolling companies were formed, for whom dialogues, or "Interludes," were written. These were usually intended to illustrate some special vice or virtue, and pointed a very strong moral.

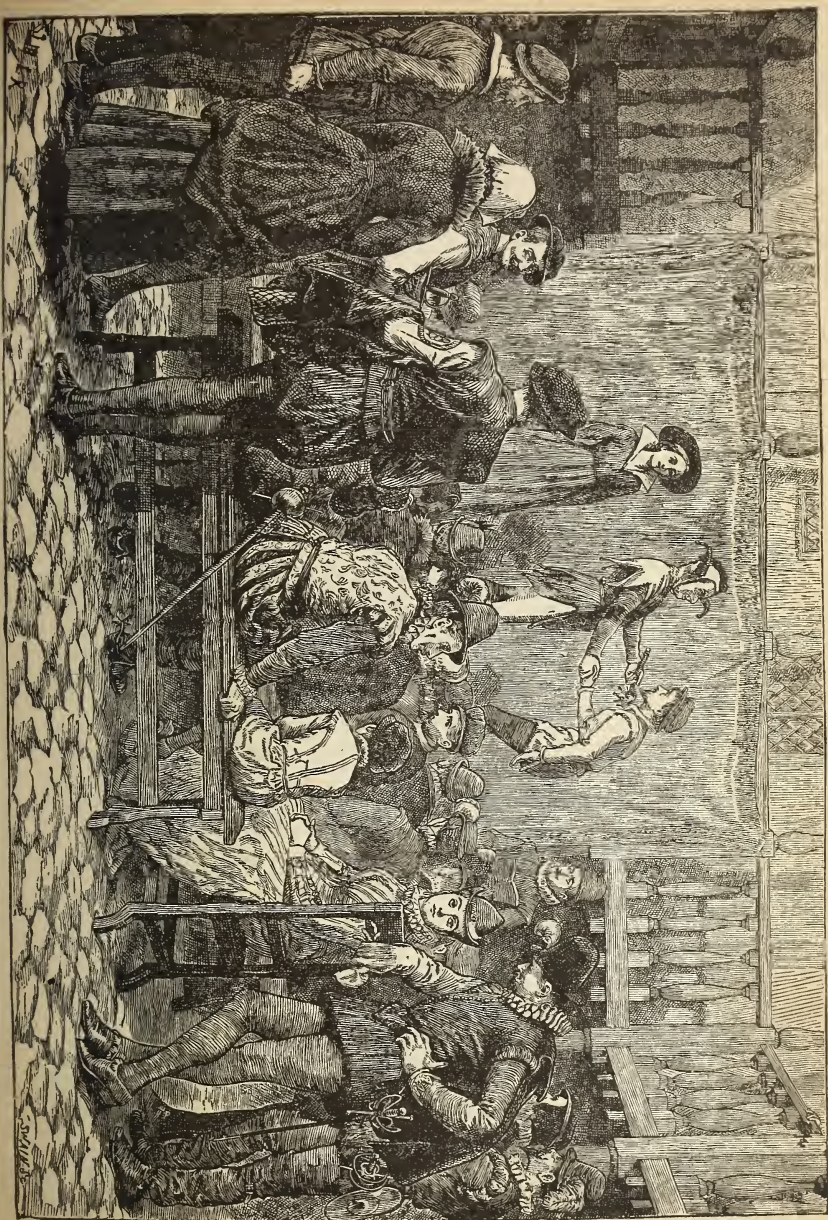
The inn-yards, both in London and the country, were the usual places for these performances, being well adapted for the purpose ; for the double rows of galleries of the inn formed on three sides a sort of balcony for the more exclusive spectators, while the humbler classes occupied rough benches in the paved court below, at one end of which a rude platform was erected, curtains were hung about it, and all was ready for the play with little trouble or expense.

Young boys followed the players and joined their companies to perform the female parts in the drama,

for no women appeared upon the stage in England until a century later.

The students at various colleges and schools, and in the Temple and Inns of Court, all had their different performances at Christmas, Michaelmas, Lady Day, etc. ; and with them originated those curious characters called "Lords and Ladies of Misrule," whose merry doings are even now sometimes enjoyed in England.

An amusing story is told of one of their wild performances. One New Year's Eve a party of students, headed by one whom they had chosen as Lord of Misrule, went down Fleet Street at midnight, knocking violently at every door. The honest citizens, who were asleep, awoke in great fright, and when the lawless summons was answered, the Lord of Misrule and his followers demanded five shillings before they would leave the door. This was usually given by the terrified inhabitants, who knew not what to make of the crowd of gayly-dressed, bespangled and masked revelers. Proceeding in this way from house to house, screaming and singing and blowing upon trumpets, they became at last so riotous that the Lord Mayor and some of his guard were called out. The Lord of Misrule, with his finery in tatters and plumes dragged, was led off to prison, whence



A play in a London Inn Yard in the time of Queen Elizabeth.



however, he was released next day. Many wild performances were permitted without punishment, so that even the public streets were hardly safe after night-fall on public holidays.

On every general holiday some public pageant, or performances, had to be given or the people were dissatisfied; and even the common duties and ceremonies of the day were conducted in a theatrical manner. To this day traces of the same custom can be found at all public banquets in England, and many of the ceremonials we are familiar with, began, no doubt, with "Her Majesty's children," as several of Queen Elizabeth's players were called.

In 1561 the first tragedy known in the English language was performed at Whitehall, a palace in London. Queen Elizabeth witnessed it and was highly pleased. The name of the play was "*Ferrex and Porrex*," and the author was Thomas Sackville, afterwards Lord Buckhurst. The players were members of the Inner Temple, and they were not at all disheartened by the number of murders, tragic encounters, etc., which crowded every scene.

We hear little more of tragedies being performed, during the next five years, but, in 1566, Queen Elizabeth visited Eton to witness the performance by the schoolboys, of a play called *Damon and Pythias*, by Richard Edwards.

During the reign of Henry VIII. a " Master of the Revels " had been appointed, whose duty it was to inspect all public performances, and the greatest care was taken to prevent anything being said to the people, even in a play, which could excite them to dislike of the king or the government, or possibly to rouse them to revolt ; consequently, in these early plays and interludes we find only the most fulsome flattery of the sovereign and royal family. The Master of the Revels gave the players their licenses, and to this day the Lord Chamberlain of England holds the same duty ; no play can be performed in public without his sanction. But, happily, times are changed, so that writers in the Nineteenth century need not direct all their fine speeches and brilliant ideas towards the throne.

About the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign the first theatre was erected, at Blackfriars, in the neighborhood of an old monastery from which it took its name.

Blackfriars was one of the most crowded quarters of London, which differed then in many respects from the London of to-day. The houses of the rich were frequently found side by side with shops and inns ; coaches were first introduced during Elizabeth's reign, before which well-to-do people used to ride on

horseback, and the poorer classes always went on foot, so there was no need of wide thoroughfares, and the streets in that neighborhood are to-day so narrow that vehicles can hardly pass through them.

The theatre at Blackfriars created general interest, and was at once patronized by all classes ; the interior arrangements were such, however, that, in order to draw a large audience, the drama must have offered extraordinary attractions.

The cheaper seats were at first not covered by a roof, so that the people who sat in them were sometimes drenched with rain while witnessing a performance. The fine gentlemen of the court and the rich tradespeople were given seats upon the stage, or rushes and mats to lounge upon.

We infer from this that the sides of the stage must have projected farther than they do to-day. Benches were provided there on payment of an extra shilling. The principal object of this early theatre seems to have been to provide some permanent place for the performances, which both players and people loved enthusiastically ; and small consideration was paid to the comfort either of audience or actors.

A writer of the day speaks of the “ windy, draughty stage,” and the inconvenient arrangements behind the scenes. The green-room seems to have been a place

where the public had as much right to enter as the players themselves, and the latter complained bitterly of this. Fine gentlemen would crowd the room, quarrelling often with the actors, for whom they professed at times a great contempt, though in some cases a player was known to be the intimate friend of a great nobleman.

Nearly all those who now began to write comedies, tragedies, interludes, etc. for the stage, became actors themselves, and lived free, rollicking lives among the people. Of these early dramatists two, Christopher Marlowe, commonly called "Kit," and Robert Greene, are best known to-day. Many others wrote at the same time, but Marlowe and Greene seem to have been the leading figures, until Shakespeare and his friend Ben Jonson appeared.

Marlowe was born in 1562 ; his father was a shoemaker in the pleasant little town of Canterbury. The boy passed his early years playing and fighting with boys of his own class. Whenever and wherever he could hear of a "show" or dramatic performance of whatever kind, he contrived to witness it, and we can picture him, one of the eager, boisterous spectators of the inn-yard plays.

After witnessing one of these crude performances, he would go home with his young head full of the

stilted, stiff sentences of the players, their exaggerations and their grotesque antics.

Naturally enough, Marlowe, who had a genius for the stage, knew something better might be done ; but for some time he had not even the rudiments of education. Some rich gentleman, it is supposed, discovered signs of genius in the shoemaker's son, for, later, he was entered at the Cambridge University, and there distinguished himself for his learning. His rough, coarse instincts, however, never left him. Marlowe became a learned scholar, but he never acquired the ways of an honest man, nor the polish of a gentleman. When he left college and went up to London he might have taken a leading place at the queen's court, where learning was so highly encouraged ; but Marlowe preferred the rough company to be found at the inns and taverns of the day, and was soon a well-known loungeur in the lower part of the city. While at college, he had written a play called "*Tamburlaine the Great*," which was brought out in London. Although a great deal of his natural coarseness, as well as the spirit of the times, is shown in this play, both the thought and language occasionally prove what true genius poor "Kit Marlowe" possessed, and make us regret that he could so degrade the talent God had given him for better uses.

He was a scoffer at all religion, yet he certainly seems to have understood what it was in others. In one of the plays, written soon after his arrival in London, "*Doctor Faustus*," he introduces the character already well-known in German literature, *Mephistopheles*, who was intended to represent the Devil. Faustus asks him whether he suffers and why he is not in hell, and Mephistopheles answers :

"Why, *this* is Hell, nor am I out of it ;  
Thinkest thou that I, that saw the face of God,  
And tasted th' eternal joys of Heaven, —  
Am not tormented with ten thousand Hells,  
In being deprived of everlasting Bliss ?"

Marlowe's life continued to be spent in acting, in lounging about London, in drunken brawls, and in writing the finest plays of the time. Besides those mentioned, he wrote various others, all highly commended in his day, and performed with great success.

Going from bad to worse, Marlowe at length met his death in a disgraceful way. For some nights the tavern which he frequented had been the scene of his quarrels with many of his reckless comrades. Going there again in a half-intoxicated condition, it took little to provoke him into a quarrel. There was

neither fear of God or man in his heart. He had thrown away all the great advantages of his life, and had few friends to care to what desperate end he brought his miserable career. There was no one present on this final night to do more than cry out in horror when Marlowe's opponent drew a knife and stabbed him to the heart. He might have been respected and beloved by the nation, but he died regretted only by those players and audiences for whom he had written.

Meantime Robert Greene, who was two years younger than Marlowe, had become a noted dramatist, and was, I regret to say, leading a life no better than that of his friend. Greene had also been a student at Cambridge, after leaving which, he, too, hastened to London, the great centre of literary work. His life was even sadder than Marlowe's, for in the midst of his wickedness he would have terrible fits of remorse, and was constantly accusing himself of his sins. He deserted a lovely wife and children giving himself up to gambling and every sort of dissipation. He died in a wretched garret where a poor couple had, out of charity, given him a pallet of straw. From this place, just before his death, he wrote his wife, beseeching of her to pay his funeral expenses, as he had not a shilling to leave behind him. Is it not a very

sad picture, and could you expect from a man who was constantly perverting his own nature, defying God and man, dramas that were pure and refined? His plays, well written as were many portions, and showing the greatest signs of genius, were coarse even for that free, bold day. Their subjects were generally historical, and the character-drawing is very fine.

Besides these plays, Greene wrote various pamphlets, or as they were called, tracts ; in one of which, "A groat's worth of wit bought with a million of repentance," he addressed a warning to his companions :

"But now return I to you then, (Marlowe, Lodge, and Peel) knowing my misery is to you no news ; and let me heartily entreat you to be warned by my harms. Delight not, as I have done, in irreligious oaths ; despise drunkenness. . . . Remember, Robert Greene perishes for want of comforts. Remember, gentlemen, your lives are like so many lighted tapers, that are with care delivered to all of you to maintain. These with wine-puffed breaths may be extinguished, with drunkenness put out, with negligence let fall. The fire of my light is now at the last snuff. My hand is tired, and I am forced to leave where I would begin, desirous that you should live though he himself be dying."

The little theatre at Blackfriars was well estab-

lished ; good actors were now to be found there, and in a long, narrow street called "Holywell," which exists to-day with little alteration, the players congregated. Walking through it now, you can see many of the tall, bow-windowed houses, the second story frame-work bulging out over a little shop-door, in which many of the actors and dramatists of Elizabeth's reign doubtless once lived. Great signs used to hang out of the windows then, and would flap in the wind while horsemen, riding by in their plumed caps, complained of them in vain. These signs indicated the life in-doors — a tavern, a lodging-house, a stable-yard, a shop, — all these were painted in gay colors on the boards. Near was an old church where the actors were married and buried, while their children were carried there to be christened by favorite stage names.

Among the best known players of the day were the Burbages — father and sons. They managed the theatre, encouraged dramatists, and performed leading parts, though they did not write, themselves. They seem to have been above the ordinary class of players. A picture exists of James Burbage ; the face is honest and manly, with a frank smile, and a great deal of refinement in the expression. The dress is the velvet costume seen now in all the plays of the Sixteenth century — silk hose and doublet ; sleeves

slashed with satin ; a chain, with ornaments around the deep collar. Burbage had friends at court. Many of the clever young noblemen of the day found the players very good company — Peele, Lodge, Gascoigne, were all writing at the time ; but in spite of the success of the theatre, the Lord Mayor and an influential class of religious citizens tried to suppress both theatres and players. To this, however, the people would not submit, and encouraged the drama in every way but the best — that is, by seeking to refine it. Notwithstanding all we hear of the “winds and draughts” at Blackfriars, the theatre must have had something very fine about it. A preacher at old St. Paul’s spoke of it as the “gorgeous playing place.” This would hardly have been said in a day of such magnificence at court, without some reason, and here and there we come across old accounts where certain expenses are put down, showing how much money was spent upon the performances. The costumes of Blackfriars are reported to have been worth five hundred pounds, (\$ 2500) and you must bear in mind that in 1578 that sum of money would buy four or five times as much as it could to-day. An old man named Henslow kept various records of theatrical matters from which we get very precise information, and, moreover, they are very entertaining. Henslow

loaned the actors money, or advanced it upon their plays, bought the *MSS.* of dramas, paying sums like £8 and £10 for a play ; he kept a theatrical wardrobe and seems to have let costumes.

Finally, he rose to being one of the managers of a theatre, and, from all accounts, was a personage feared, if not respected, by the gay and reckless players of the day. He is one of those persons who, dull in themselves, do the greatest service to literature by jotting down trifling details of the life going on about them, and who, in a few words, conjure up a vivid scene in which the great men of the day play a part.

Let us now take a glance at the audience of the Blackfriars theatre ; for you must remember that Shakespeare, whose story I have next to tell, drew his characters chiefly from the people he saw about him. The lords and ladies of the day, who, as I told you, sat upon the stage, were the leading figures. Learned, affected, sometimes true-hearted as they were, ambition governed so many of them, what wonder that in plays of the day they were frequently represented as worldly, hypocritical and scheming ? Fortunately for the times, there were to be found many gentle, modest women, and they also influenced the dramatists' work. The middle class were well-to

do ; the women of this class dressed gaudily, and were rather bold in speech and manner ; the men were hardy, uneducated, and fond of all sorts of amusements, looking up somewhat to the inn-keepers, who were public favorites both in real life and on the stage, fond of giving their opinions, and annoyed if they were not received with approval. The large class of spectators who took the very cheap seats or standing-places must have been a curious assemblage ; servants, stable-boys, sailors and their like, rough and noisy either in applause or condemnation of what was going on, not unfrequently fighting during the performance, or pelting some poor actor with whatever missiles came to hand. Sometimes the uproar became so general that the players were silenced, the gallery people rushed down upon the stage, fighting, not only among themselves, but with the actors ; clubs and swords were brought into use, and on more than one occasion the city authorities had to be called in to quiet the disturbance. Fortunately, such scenes were not of every-day occurrence, or the Burbages and their friends must have given up in despair ; but I speak of them to show what scenes could occur in the theatre for which those early dramatists wrote. The stage management seems to have been tolerably good ; the scenery was, of course, extremely rude, and

the actors depended largely on the indulgence of the audience as well as on the merit of the play. In the old records of the time we often find amusing allusions to the habits of the actors and the theatre, which closely resemble those of to-day ; for example, on one occasion, when a new piece was produced, great anxiety was felt in advance as to how it would be received ; the actor who writes of this, says that on the opening night he dressed early, in order to station himself at a round hole in the drop-curtain, from which he could look into the theatre and watch the arrival of the audience. He had probably written the play himself, for he was greatly annoyed by the sarcastic remarks of a fellow-actor at his back ; fortunately, the house was crowded early, and some distinguished people honored the play with their presence and applause. Such simple chronicles bring us very near to the people of that day.

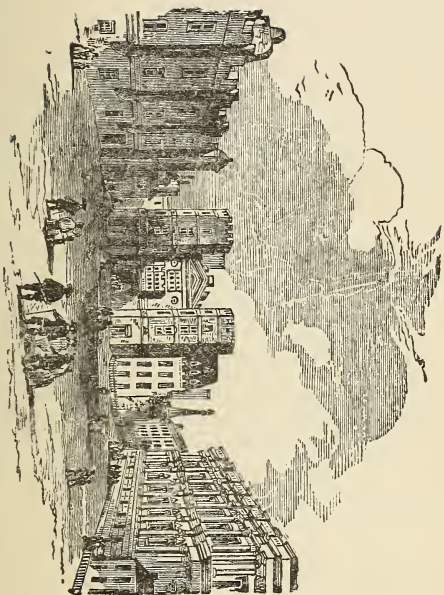
I have told you the story of the theatre of the Sixteenth century, so that you may understand better the works of William Shakespeare when we come to it.

The drama was well established by the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Poetry and pageant had led up to it, as well as the theatrical feeling of the people. In 1587 the English public had become accustomed to stage representation, although, with very

few exceptions, no great genius had been shown in them. When any era in literature or composition begins, you must not expect to find a very perfect system in the arrangement of ideas, or skill in expressing them. The drama, well established as it was, was still new, and, in some ways, disorderly. "Kit" Marlowe, miserable, wretched creature though he was, had done a great service in introducing *blank verse* into his plays. Hitherto rhyme had always been employed, and this frequently has the effect of weakening what is called the "situation," as well as the style of a drama.

In 1587 Marlowe and Greene were still at work; the minor writers scribbling away, running to old Henslow for their few pounds at a time.

Meanwhile, in a country village through which the Avon runs quietly, seeing nothing on either bank to disturb its even, sleepy course, a young man was wondering what path he would pursue in life. Bread he must make — a new home he had to seek. He little knew, I fancy, that for his sake, one day, all travelers would lovingly and reverently turn their steps to *Stratford-upon-Avon*.



Whitehall, as it existed in 1746.



DRAMATISTS PRECEDING SHAKESPEARE.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE. 1562—1593. Wrote "Tamburlaine the Great;" "Life and Death of Dr Faustus;" "The Massacre at Paris;" "Edward the Second;" "The Jew of Malta," etc.

ROBERT GREENE. 1560—1592. "Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay;" "History of Orlando;" "Alphonsus, King of Arragon;" "James IV.," "George-a-Greene the Pinner of Wakefield," "The Looking-glass for London and England," etc. and tracts: "A Groat's worth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance," etc.

GEORGE PEELE. 1553—1598. "The Arraignment of Paris;" "Edward I.;" "The Old Wives' Tale;" "Tragedy of Absalom;" "The Love of King David and Fair Bethsaba;" "The Battle of Alcazar," etc.

THOMAS LODGE. 1556—1625. "The Wounds of Civil War;" "Rosalynde" (said to be the prototype of Shakespeare's "*As You Like it*"), etc.

RICHARD EDWARDS. 1523—1566. "Damon and Pythias;" "Paradise of Dainty Devices;" "Comedy of Palamon and Arcite," etc.

GEORGE GASCOIGNE. 1537—1577. "Princely Pleasures of Kenilworth Castle;" "Comedy of Supposes;" "Tragedy of Jocasta," etc.

THOMAS NASH. 1558—1600. "Summer's Last Will and Testament;" "Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage;" "Supplication of Pierce Penniless to the Devil;" "Christ's Tears over Jerusalem," etc.

JOHN LYLY. 1553 — 1600. The author of "Euphues" wrote nine plays performed at court.

The following were among the earliest predecessors of Shakespeare: NICOLAS UDALL, "Ralph Royster Doyster," dated 1551. THOMAS RICHARDS, "Misogonus," 1560. THOMAS SACKVILLE, Earl of Dorset, "Ferrex and Porrex," 1561. JOHN STILL, Bishop of Bath, "Gammer Gurton's Needle," 1565.

#### IV.

##### SHAKESPEARE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

The Birth-place of Shakespeare — Early life — The Country town of Queen Elizabeth's Day — Shakespeare as an Actor — In London — Ben Jonson.

GOING through Henley Street in Stratford-on-Avon, to-day, you come upon a curious old house with the peaked roof, timber-and-plaster walls and lattice-work casements which belong to the Sixteenth century. A shabby old house it is, yet one which every stranger enters with curiosity and delight, for here on the twenty-third of April, 1564, William Shakespeare was born.

When Shakespeare was a little boy his father held the position of high-bailiff, or mayor, of the town, and seems to have been well known and universally re-

spected. He had married Mary Arden, the daughter of Robert Arden, a gentleman of an ancient and honorable family. Old records in Stratford mention John Shakespeare, the poet's father, as "a gentleman of good figure and fashion;" and, although some authorities think that he was either a wool-stapler or a butcher, the evidences are very slight. These discussions, however, seem of little consequence; the elder Shakespeare probably had various employments, and that at different times he was in money trouble, if not almost in poverty, we have reason to be very sure.

William was one of ten children. We fancy he must have shown some marks of genius at an early age, since he was sent to a grammar school, studied Greek and Latin, and seemed to have gained a wonderful amount of general information.

Going through the orderly, peaceful English towns to-day, with their air of thrift and matter-of-fact comfort, it is not easy to realize what the provincial life was in Shakspeare's boyhood.

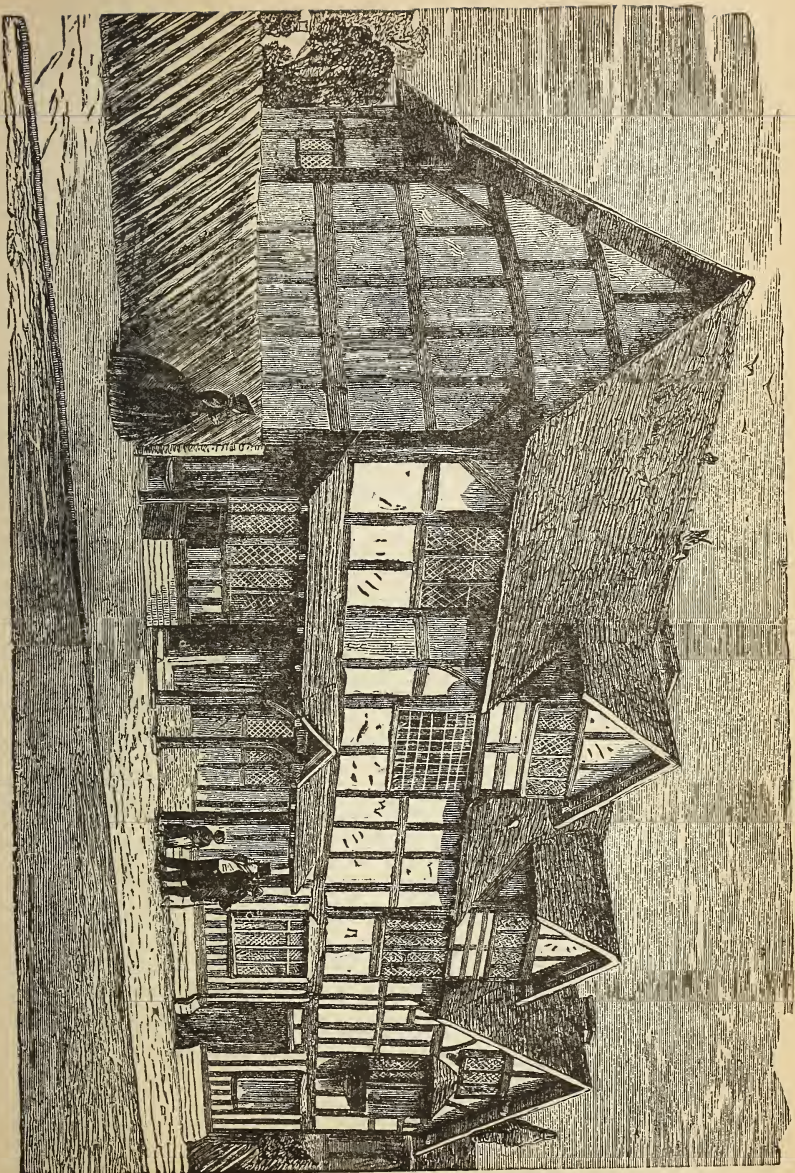
Although we know so few of the details of his life, his plays give constant evidence that the experiences of his early years, the people he saw about him, their manners and ways of thinking, furnished him with a great deal of his material.

We know that the love of pageantry and spectacles

reached even so secluded a spot as Stratford. When the peasantry held a holiday they indulged in some general revel or merry-making, dancing about a may-pole in fantastic costumes, or going through some of those half theatrical performances in which both players and audience delighted. There was a curious mixture of superstition and boldness in the life of the country people. Witches were believed in, ghosts were supposed to haunt every church-yard, and even fairies, goblins and elves had a place in their imagination. The old people in the neighborhood were much thought of, since they could tell strange tales of what had happened in their youth. On winter evenings groups would gather about the firesides in the stone-floored kitchens of the peasantry, or the more spacious servants' hall of some gentleman's dwelling, and here the wildest, most improbable histories were recounted. Every house had its haunted room, and few old crones would admit that they had never seen a ghost.

On All-hallows Eve and similar festivals, curious tricks were played and mysterious ceremonies gone through with, one of which will illustrate the character of the people. It was customary for a group to sit at midnight in some church-yard with eyes fixed intently upon the church door. If any one of the number was destined to die before the year was out, a ghostly figure

resembling his would be seen to enter the church-yard and slowly make its way into the church. An old chronicler of Stratford, speaking of this superstition gravely records that once, in such a group, one of the number fell asleep, and his companions, watching anxiously, beheld the ghostly counterpart of their sleeping comrade enter the church door, upon which the horrified little company fled tumultuously. Signs and dreams were solemnly believed in. It was no uncommon thing for a shepherd returning late at night to declare that he had been followed by a witch, or even so remarkable a creature as a fairy. Fairies were supposed to steal, or change, children in their cradles, and it was even believed by the peasantry that on a certain night in the year, when the fairies came out to dance in the marshes, such children could be reclaimed. But great courage and patience were supposed to be necessary in this weird enterprise, and the old gossips about the firesides were fond of telling how a certain man, whose wife and child had both been stolen, went out to the moor to watch, on the given night; his endurance, however, gave way, and he fell asleep, waking to hear sounds of unearthly laughter, and to see the fairies, on tiny, ghostly horses, riding away in the mist, his wife and child among them. These tales were listened to with awe and delight, and you can see



Birthplace of Shakespeare.



by what a spirit of imagination and wild fancy Shakespeare's boyhood was surrounded.

The inhabitants of a country town in Queen Elizabeth's day were very distinctly separated in class, and we find, by reading old chronicles, that there were even "nine sortes of gentlemen," counting upwards from the country squire through the nobility. Many luxuries, as you know, had been introduced into the households of the rich ; and I will quote from Holinshead, a chronicler of that day, part of the description which he gives of a fine house :

"The wals of our houses at the inner sides in like sort be either hanged with tapisterie, arras worke or painted cloths, wherein either diverse histories, or hearbes, beasts, knots, and such like, are stained, or else they are seeled with oke of our owne, or wainescot brought hither out of the east countries, whereby the roomes are not a little commanded, made warme, and much more close than otherwise they would be. As for stoves, we have not hitherto used them greatlie yet do they now begin to be made in diverse houses of the gentrie Likewise in the houses of knights, gentlemen, etc., it is not geson to behold generallie their great provision of Turkie worke, pewter, brasse, fine linen, and thereto costlie cupbords of plate, worth five

or six hundred or a thousand pounds, to be deemed by estimation."

In fine houses great feastings and merry-makings took place on Christmas and New Year's Eve, Twelfth Night and Easter Day. Masquers and minstrels were employed in the great hall ; feast after feast would be provided, the stewards greatly enjoying the good cheer to which they were unused at other times.

Shakespeare's allusions to these gay doings are so numerous, that in reading or seeing his plays, some knowledge of them is necessary to complete our enjoyment.

We can imagine him, even as a boy, going about among the people, taking note of all the different characters, who were to be seen in a town like Stratford, and observing their peculiarities. Conspicuous figures in such a town were the pedagogue or school-master, who was frequently a conjurer as well ; the scrivener or writer of legal documents ; the clergyman, who was often given the title of " Sir " ; and that bundle of pomposity who combined in himself the duties of parish beadle, town-crier and sexton.

Among the rural characters, the rich farmer or yeoman held a prominent place, and we fancy the society in which John Shakespeare moved was of this class.

In the peasant class was a creature who often fig-

ures in Shakespeare's plays, the "country bumpkin," or lout. This fellow was sure to be found on all occasions of merry-making, and his stupidity was a perpetual source of amusement even to the people accustomed to seeing him constantly. An old writer gives a curious account of this class :

They worked in the fields, watched the sheep, or guided the oxen. "He expostulates with his oxen very understandingly," says Bishop Earle, "and speaks *gee* and *ree* better than English. His mind is not much distracted with objects, but if a good fat cow come in his way, he stands dumb and astonished, and though his haste be never so great, will fix here half an hour's contemplation. His habitation is some poor thatched roof, distinguished from his barn by the loop-holes that let out smoke, which the rain had long since washed through but for the double ceiling of bacon on the inside, which has hung there from his grandsire's time, and is yet to make rashers for his posterity.

. . . . .

Sunday he esteemst a day to make merry in, and thinks a bag-pipe as essential to it as evening prayer where he walks very solemnly after service with his hands coupled behind him, and censures the dancing

of his parish. His compliment with his neighbor is a good thump on the back.

. . . . .

He is sensible of no calamity but the burning of a stack of corn or the overflowing of a meadow, and thinks Noah's flood the greatest plague that ever was; not because it drowned the world, but spoiled the grass. For death he is never troubled, and if he get in but his harvest before, let it come when it will, he cares not."

Many years after Shakespeare left Stratford, he wrote the play of *As You Like It*, in which he drew very perfect pictures of these country people, in *Audrey*, *Silvius* and *Phebe*; though the latter is somewhat idealized. Beyond these humbler classes, Shakespeare must, now and then, have had glimpses into the higher life of the day, whence he drew his *Katherines* and *Portias*, his *Rosalinds* and *Celias*, his *Bassanios* and *Romeos*, his kings and courtiers.

Much that was graceful and picturesque was brought into this simple country life in which the poet's early years were passed. Nothing could be prettier than the wedding festivals. It was customary to celebrate what was called the "troth-plight" some weeks in advance—a betrothal ceremony often alluded to in Shakespeare's plays and still retained in Germany

and Russia to this day. It was performed by the clergyman, and in effect was very similar to the marriage service ; both this and the wedding were accompanied by a pretty, simple sort of merry-making ; the bridal party generally walked to church, and a book\* of the day describes the procession so quaintly that I must quote one passage :

“ The bride being attired in a gown of sheep’s russet, and a kirtle of fine worsted, her hair attired with a ’billement of gold, and her hair as yellow as gold hanging down behind her which was curiously combed and plaited, she was led to church between two sweet boys with bride laces and rosemary tied about their silken sleeves. There was a fair bride-cup of silver, gilt, carried before her, wherein was a goodly branch of rosemary, gilded very fair, hung about with silken ribbands of all colours. Musicians came next, then a group of maidens, some bearing great bride-cakes, others garlands of wheat finely-gilded ; and thus they passed on to the church.”

In the grammar-school to which young Shakespeare was sent, few books were used, and so far as we now know, they consisted of the following : *The Grammar of King Henry the Eighth*, which by the command of Queen Elizabeth was taught in all the schools in the

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\*History of Jack Newbury.

realm : a work entitled EIPHNAPXIA, *sive Elizabetha*. This book was a eulogy on the character and government of Elizabeth and her ministers, and was likewise commanded to be read in every school : “ a matchless contrivance,” said Bishop Hurd, “ to imprint a sense of loyalty on the minds of the people.” To these were added some Greek and Latin text-books, but it is a question whether Shakespeare learned much of either language, for although his plays abound in classical allusions, several people of his own day declared that he was no scholar, but was indebted to others for his use of the learned languages.

His father unfortunately became almost impoverished, and withdrew him from school when still young, to assist towards the support of the family. At this time young Shakespeare’s life must have been a strange mixture, for he read whatever he could lay his hands upon, and quaint old books they must have been. Looking at the volumes printed at that day, and now preserved in various museums, you see from the very type and binding how few could have found their way into poor households. But Shakespeare’s imagination needed little to feed upon, and from even such scanty sources as he then possessed he may have drawn some of the inspiration which

later, within a few years, made him the greatest poet the world has ever known.

During his boyhood he had doubtless assisted at many of the mysteries and miracle-plays performed at the grammar-school from time to time ; and he had also witnessed the splendid festivities at Kenilworth Castle, given by the Earl of Leicester in honor of Queen Elizabeth. Nothing before or since has equalled those festivities at Kenilworth. They lasted for days, and all the park and spacious courts and grounds of the castle became like a moving theatre. It was supposed, you know, that Leicester desired to obtain the queen's hand ; but he had already been secretly married to poor Amy Robsart, whose story Sir Walter Scott has used for the foundation of his beautiful novel of *Kenilworth*.

Shakespeare was at this time twelve years of age, but his mind was such that he appreciated all the wonders and splendors of the royal pageant, which he beheld with the eyes both of a poet and painter ; and we can fancy him afterwards, rambling about Stratford, fishing in the Avon, or nest-hunting, with his head full of the fancies suggested by all that he had seen and heard at Kenilworth.

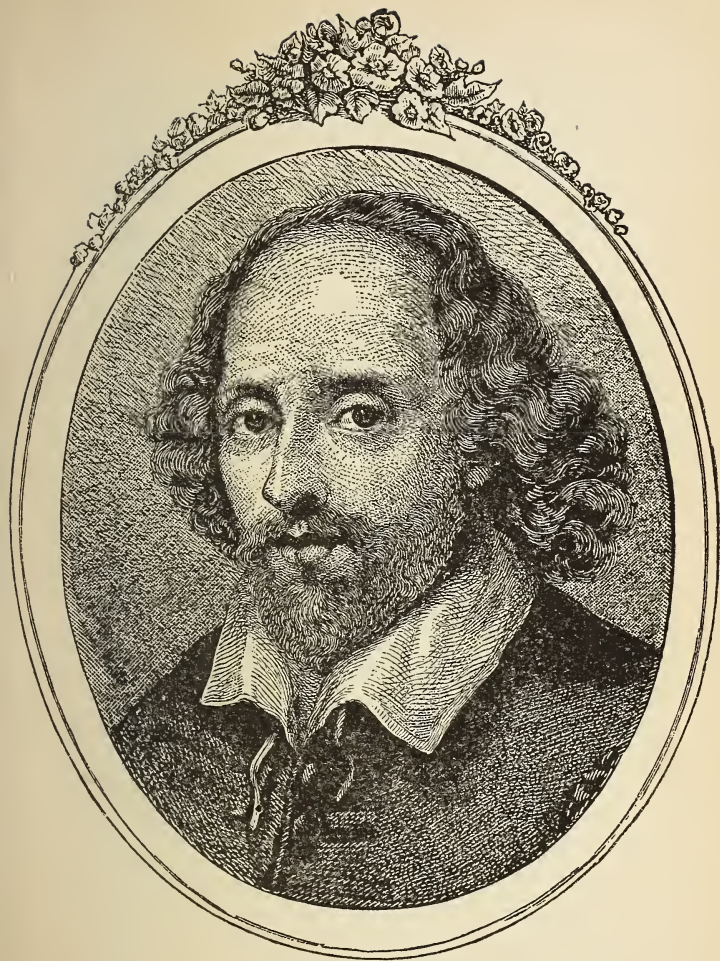
The next event in his life at Stratford of which we have any account is rather a startling one, for at the

age of eighteen he married Anne Hathaway, a farmer's daughter, eight years older than himself, who lived in a cottage, still standing, in the neighboring village of Shottery.

Within a few years, three children were born to them, and their names and dates of baptism are recorded in the parish register: Susanna, and (twins) Hamnet and Judith. With the new cares and responsibilities of a family, Shakespeare began to think of something better in life than could be found at Stratford; and, curiously enough, a very foolish circumstance decided him to leave his native place.

Close to Stratford was Charlecote, the manor of Sir Thomas Lucy, a nobleman of high distinction, who was unpopular with the villagers by reason of his proud and imperious manners. Fulbroke Park, which belonged to him, was a favorite resort of Shakespeare, and it is supposed that this beautiful spot suggested to him, later, the play of *As You Like It*.

In an hour of idle mischief or caprice, Shakespeare, still little more than a boy, joined some foolish fellows in an attempt at deer-stealing in Fulbroke Park; but it was so quickly seen that his exploit had originated merely in a spirit of fun, that, after a short confinement in the keeper's lodge, he was released. A public reprimand was inflicted, however, by Sir Thomas,



William Shakespeare.



and Shakespeare, irritated by this, wrote some satirical verses which he fixed upon Sir Thomas' Park gates, and circulated about the country. This event is the only one in Shakespeare's life which seems to have produced an effect on the inhabitants of Stratford, who were quite unconscious that a great genius was growing up among them.

A venerable man, Sir Thomas Jones, who lived in the last century at Stratford, remembered to have heard accurate accounts of this exploit, from his grandparents, who were living there when it occurred ; but he, unfortunately, could tell little else.

Sir Thomas Lucy was exasperated by this foolish act of young Shakespeare, and began a prosecution for libel, which ended unpleasantly for the poet, who, having, as I have said, heavy cares and responsibilities, and feeling uncomfortable in Stratford, and beginning, perhaps, to realize the power of his own genius, determined to try his fortunes in London. This was about the year 1587 ; and in the last chapter I told you how flourishing plays and players had become by this time in London. Marlowe and Greene were busily at work, and so were a number of petty scribblers. Try and picture the young man from Stratford making his appearance among them, for it seems that his first thought was of the theatre.

The tradition that Shakespeare began life in London by hanging about the door of the theatre, and holding horses for those who came, is very improbable, for he had an intimate friend in Richard Burbage, of whom I spoke in the last chapter, and we may conclude that he at once joined the company of actors at Blackfriars ; at all events he was established as a player very soon after his arrival, and the best authorities I have examined speak of him as acting very well. One of these, Chettle, writing of various persons connected with the theatre, says of Shakespeare :

“ Myselfe have seene his demeanor no less civil than he is excellent in the quality he professes. Besides divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing which argues his honestie and his facetious grace in writing that approves his art.” \*

It seems a pity that we have no record of any special performances in which the great poet took part. Sometimes his name appeared with the list of actors at the top of a play-bill, but we seldom know even the part he performed. An aged man who died in Stratford long ago, told one of the poet's biographers that his great grandfather remembered to have seen Shakespeare perform the part of an old man in one of his

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\* Reed's Shakespeare. Vol. II. pp. 237—233.

own plays ; and from the description we infer that it was the part of *Adam* in *As You Like It*. One of his favorite parts we know to have been *Hamlet*, of which he made more than actors do, to-day.

However, his attention was chiefly turned to literature. He had already written a poem and dedicated it to the Earl of Southampton, and he now began those wonderful dramatic works which to-day place him beyond all comparison in the whole world of literature.

There is some dispute as to which play was written first. Some authorities say it was *Richard II.* in 1593 ; others, that it was *Henry VI.* ; at all events, his first plays were upon historical subjects, and they followed in quick succession, being written rapidly and with entire unconsciousness of his own great genius. It is *said* that he was first employed in revising or re-writing the plays of others, and in superintending the productions brought to the manager of the theatre by obscurer writers. Among the earliest of his plays was *Richard III.* He was in the habit of visiting Crosby Hall, where, as I told you in a previous chapter, so many famous persons had resided and which had been the palace of the wicked Duke of Gloucester afterwards Richard III.

While our poet was in London, acting with Bur-

bage and writing his historical dramas, Crosby Hall was the residence of that sweet sister of Sir Philip Sidney, to whom he wrote his *Arcadia*, and Shakespeare, who lived near by, was her constant guest.

Walking about the quiet courtyard of Crosby Hall to-day, looking up at its oriel windows and through the archways, you can fancy Shakespeare strolling about here some summer evening or sitting in the deep window seats with "Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother," and devising his wonderful tragedy of *King Richard III*; writing it for the merry players at Blackfriars — playing in it no doubt himself, for an audience who seem to have been only half conscious of the great genius among them. In the play when King Richard is represented as wooing Lady Anne, the widow of the murdered Edward, he says to her :

*Gloucester :*

"And if thy poor, devoted servant may  
But beg one favour at thy gracious hand,  
Thou dost confirm his happiness forever."

*Anne :*

"What is it? "

*Gloucester :*

"That it would please thee leave these sad designs  
To him that hath more cause to be a mourner,  
And presently repair to Crosby House."

Soon after this "*The Merchant of Venice*," one of Shakespeare's finest plays, was written and put on the

stage. In this his art is thought to have reached its highest point, although he was still young in years and fame. To this day, phrases and ideas in "*The Merchant of Venice*" are quoted in all the languages of the civilized world ; but their author hardly seems to have thought his genius worth more than the successes at the little theatre, and lived modestly and unobtrusively, with so little that was conspicuous indeed, that few of his fellow workers thought it worth while to give posterity a record of his life.

Pictures of him are fortunately in our possession, and from these we can fancy him walking about Bishopsgate, going in and out of the theatre, jesting in his gentle fashion — a well-built man thirty-five or thereabouts, with a handsome grave face, expressive eyes, and a noble forehead, wearing the moustache and pointed beard of the day, dressing in the costumes of Queen Elizabeth's courtiers ; a gentleman, I fancy, in every sense of the word ; honorable and upright all his companions testify.

By this time, the company and managers of Blackfriars Theatre had made a better start in the world, and a new theatre, 'The Globe, was started on the other side of the river. Shakespeare himself became a stock proprietor, and from the outset the enterprise was successful.

He was making many friends in London among the great people of the day. But, now and then, he refreshed himself with a trip to his old home ; enjoying the relaxation of the quiet country life, the society of his wife and children, his old friends, who were doubtless proud enough of their now famous townsman. He had not forgotten Sir Thomas Lucy's severity, for he had pictured him as "*Justice Shallow*" in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, a play written expressly to please Queen Elizabeth.

Up in London he was patronized by the Queen, and certainly he had the very best literary society of the day. Lord Bacon, a great writer, of whom we shall hear more later, was then a comparatively young man, but high in public estimation, and there is no doubt a friendship existed between him and the great dramatist. The Earl of Essex was Bacon's friend and Shakespeare's as well, and the three must have had many pleasant meetings.

One of the poet's friends was old John Florio, the compiler of the first Italian Dictionary. Florio was a constant visitor at the Earl of Southampton's where Shakespeare frequently met him, and from Florio he no doubt got many excellent suggestions for the *scenes and incidents* of his plays.

That Shakespeare was much loved by his friends

we may be very sure. All allusions to him are kindly and gentle in their spirit ; except where an occasional rival spoke slightly of him as an author, we find no mention of him that is not pleasant ; and there is no act recorded in his life as a man that does not prove him upright and honorable towards all the world.

In business matters he found himself singularly successful for a *genius*. He was soon second on the list of stockholders at the Globe Theatre, and the wardrobe and stage accessories belonged to him. At the lowest estimate his income must have been three hundred pounds a year ; a sum worth in our money to-day, at least eight thousand dollars.

In 1602 he purchased a home in Stratford, "*New Place*," the site of which is shown at the present time ; and from year to year he added to his property. He looked with more and more pleasure to his country home, as the business of life increased, but his pen was rarely idle. He wrote his plays hurriedly first for stage representation, but later, altered, corrected and revised them ; a proof of his own fine feeling for his art, as well as his powers of self-criticism.

Among Shakespeare's London friends one figure is most prominent. Have you not heard the phrase —

"Oh! Rare Ben Jonson?" This was applied to Shakespeare's fellow-worker, considered the next dramatist to the "Bard of Avon."

But to-day Jonson's work cannot be compared to that of Shakespeare. While *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and all the rest are acted, read, translated, studied, and loved by all the world, Ben Jonson's works exist in little more than the name; but in the Sixteenth century days they were greatly thought of, and Jonson himself was quite a famous man.

He was born in 1573, when Shakespeare was nine years old, when Spenser was twenty, and when Greene and Marlowe were boys. His father was a clergyman, but his mother, being a widow, married soon again, this time to a bricklayer; and it is said Ben learned his step-father's very humble trade. However he went to Westminster School and was a pupil of William Camden, a famous antiquary who died about 1625. Later, Jonson had some college life, but while very young joined the army then fighting in Holland and Flanders.

At the age of nineteen, however, he was acting at the "Curtain Theatre" in London, and already beginning, like many others, to scribble for the stage. His first work of any note was, "*Every Man in his*

*Humor*," brought out in 1596. This play has undoubtedly certain merits, for Jonson possessed genius ; but this humor is often rough and coarse, and he wrote chiefly to please the people of his own day while Shakespeare's genius was at work for all the future.

Jonson's companionship was eagerly sought. He was a merry, ease-loving, good-natured wit, fond of classical learning and literature ; but fond also of a tavern supper where he was recognized as the chief member of the company. He and Shakespeare may have been, in a certain way, rivals, but we find many expressions which show that Jonson truly loved his greater friend. "My darling Shakespeare," he calls him once ; and again, "Sweet Swan of Avon," and "Gentle Will." It is pleasant to think of them associated as they were, both as actors and writers.

Even then, though young, Jonson had rather a burly figure ; his face was florid ; his eyes twinkled. He had a merry jest ready for every one, and his laugh was very sweet. Sometimes, he and the "Sweet Swan of Avon" indulged in a sort of game of wit, each trying to outdo the other in merry speeches. But Shakespeare never had Jonson's reputation for jesting and light-heartedness of speech.

In 1598, "*Every Man in his Humor*" was played at

"The Globe," and Shakespeare took a leading part. The public cheered Jonson. The Queen encouraged him ; but he had his own vexations. While Shakespeare's life flowed on temperately and smoothly, poor Jonson had a hundred petty troubles and trials ; sometimes, it is true, very great ones.

He fought a duel, killing his opponent ; and later, some early friends of his having been tried for treason, Jonson boldly declared he was one of the accomplices. He was thrown into prison and narrowly escaped with his life. While in the dungeon, it was supposed condemned to death, his old mother prepared a poison, of which she intended to give him a part the day before his execution, taking the rest herself. But Jonson was set free at last, and his noisy burly figure was seen in the world again.

Meanwhile, Shakespeare's great work went on, untouched by the occasional shafts, which, of course were shot at him. His first plays had been historical. He now turned to lighter subjects and wrote *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *As You Like It*. His life in these days was particularly bright and happy it is thought ; but in *As You Like It*, merry as the play is, one character, that of *Jacquess*, shows how perfectly the poet appreciated the melancholy side of human

nature. But of these plays, and all that followed, we will speak later.

*Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, a delightful comedy, was about this time produced at the Temple, the students performing it while the queen and her court witnessed it with delight. It was acted in the great Hall, and the old records of the Temple speak of it as a fine performance ; but little is said of its author. After the play was over, the queen danced several times with different lords and gentlemen, and a banquet was held. Shakespeare, no doubt, was one of the company.

Soon after this his life was greatly saddened. Some of his near and dear friends were ruined. Essex was beheaded, Southampton sent to the Tower—all these sad events must have filled our poet with dismay and melancholy ; and his work henceforth shows that he felt more of the sterner part of life. *Hamlet*, the king of all tragedies, was soon after written.

In 1603 Queen Elizabeth died, and James I. came to the throne. Court Masques became all the rage. but Shakespeare disdained to write anything of the kind. They were curious allegorical performances, neither one thing nor the other ; hardly to be classed as *dramatic* except in *action* and a sort of representa-

tion about them, but not to be compared with the great works of Shakespeare. Jonson wrote for them, and other writers sprang into notice as composers of comedies.

Beaumont and Fletcher, two friends who wrote together, became well known ; also a host of others, Dekker, Middleton, etc., and in the first year of the reign of James I. no less than eighteen theatres were in existence in the city of London, where thirty years before not one was known.

## V.

SHAKESPEARE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES. (*Continued.*)

Friendship between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.—Queen Elizabeth at the theatre.—Shakespeare leaves London, 1609.—His life at Stratford.—His daughters.—His death, in 1616.—Relics preserved at Stratford.—Ben Jonson's last years.—The Apollo Club.—Randolph, the poet, meets Jonson.—Death of Jonson, in 1623.—Extracts from the Plays.

MANY writers have tried to prove that Shakespeare and Ben Jonson were not good friends ; but there is every evidence to the contrary.

I have told you in what terms Jonson spoke of Shakespeare. More than this, there are records made by those who saw the two together, which show us clearly enough the friendly, good-natured feeling that existed between the two.

Jonson, as I have said, spent much of his time at the taverns, where also Shakespeare was occasionally

to be found, and Fuller, a writer of the day, speaks of them as follows :

“ Many were the wit-combats betwixt him [ Shakespeare ] and Ben Jonson ; which two I beheld, like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war. Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning ; solid, but slow in his performances. Shakespeare, like the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.”

At the theatre they met on good terms ; and although Jonson had not Shakespeare's success, he seems to have understood that he did not merit it. Shakespeare, after some years of patient earnest work, found himself rich enough to retire from public life ; many think from his anxiety to do this, that his heart was not in his profession ; but such was not the case. One anecdote among many will show you how entirely he threw himself into the character he was performing, and how well he appreciated what was becoming in an actor. It is said that Queen Elizabeth was fond of witnessing plays from behind the scenes ; and on one occasion, while Shakespeare was acting, she walked across the stage ; the audience loudly applauded her, and the queen, turning to the poet,

bowed very politely. Shakespeare, however, went on with his acting, taking no notice of her majesty, who retiring behind the scenes did her best to attract his attention. When he was about to leave the stage she again appeared, and this time dropped her glove. Shakespeare, who was playing *the King*, in *Henry IV.*, stooped to pick it up, at the same time adding these lines to the speech he was making :

“And though now bent on this high embassy,  
Yet stoop we to take up our cousin's glove.”

Leaving the stage he handed the glove to her majesty, who exclaimed with delight at the dignity of his behavior.

In 1609 Shakespeare left London for the home he had bought at Stratford-on-Avon. He was then in his forty-fifth year ; his genius still at its best ; but we fancy that the death of friends had subdued him. He retained a strong affection for his native town, and his home there is described as a large comfortable dwelling of brick and plaster, the garden of which he specially enjoyed. His two daughters, Susanna and Judith, lived with him ; the former, we are told, was his favorite, a girl of quick perceptions and natural sweetness of disposition ; but it is a singular fact that,

while the ladies of the metropolis whom Shakespeare certainly had visited were skilled in every accomplishment of the day, his own daughters were left with comparatively slight education.

Susanna had acquired some book learning and, we doubt not, was her father's companion in his studies of this time ; but Judith, as a document of Stratford testifies, could not, at the age of thirty-two, write her own name ! Of Shakespeare's wife we know but little. She and the poet seem to have had certain misunderstandings which kept them apart, and it is supposed that Shakespeare made a settlement upon her during his lifetime, since in his will he made only a trifling mention of her — leaving to her his second-best bed-stead.

The poet's life now glided on peacefully and comfortably in his native town. He continued to write ; some of his best plays being the work of these years of retirement : one of them, *A Winter's Tale*, was performed for the first time at Court, in the presence of King James I., in 1611\* ; and in this play occur some of the most beautiful and tender lines from his pen. He is said to have written *Henry VIII.*, one of these later plays, in connection with the dramatist Fletcher. His manuscripts were sent to London,

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\* The dates of Shakespeare's plays are difficult to determine ; even the best authorities differing somewhat.

where they were bought by the theatre managers and the plays performed ; but not until years later were they published in book form. We know, unfortunately, but little of the poet's life at this time, but it must have been a pleasant one ; he had society, and that of a good kind, in the neighborhood ; and occasionally references are made to visits he received from old London friends.

One of his Stratford associates was Doctor Hall, a learned physician and a man of excellent family, to whom, in June, 1607, Susanna Shakespeare was married. The poet seems to have been well pleased with this arrangement ; much more so than with the marriage, in 1616, of his youngest daughter, Judith, to one Thomas Quincy, a vintner, of Stratford. Soon after this, though in perfect health, Shakespeare made his will, leaving the bulk of his property to Susanna and her heirs. Of his last days we have no record ; his death must have been sudden, for we know that on the 25th of March, when he made his will, he was, as he says himself in the first paragraph of the document, "in perfect health and memory ;" and on the 23d of April, 1616, the fifty-second anniversary of his birth, he died.

Doctor Hall, his son-in-law, was much given to writing accounts of diseases and their symptoms and

treatment as studied by himself, and it is remarkable that he left no record of the mortal illness of so great a man as Shakespeare, which he might undoubtedly have described. We only know that Shakespeare died, as I have said, and two days later, on the 25th of April, 1616, he was buried.

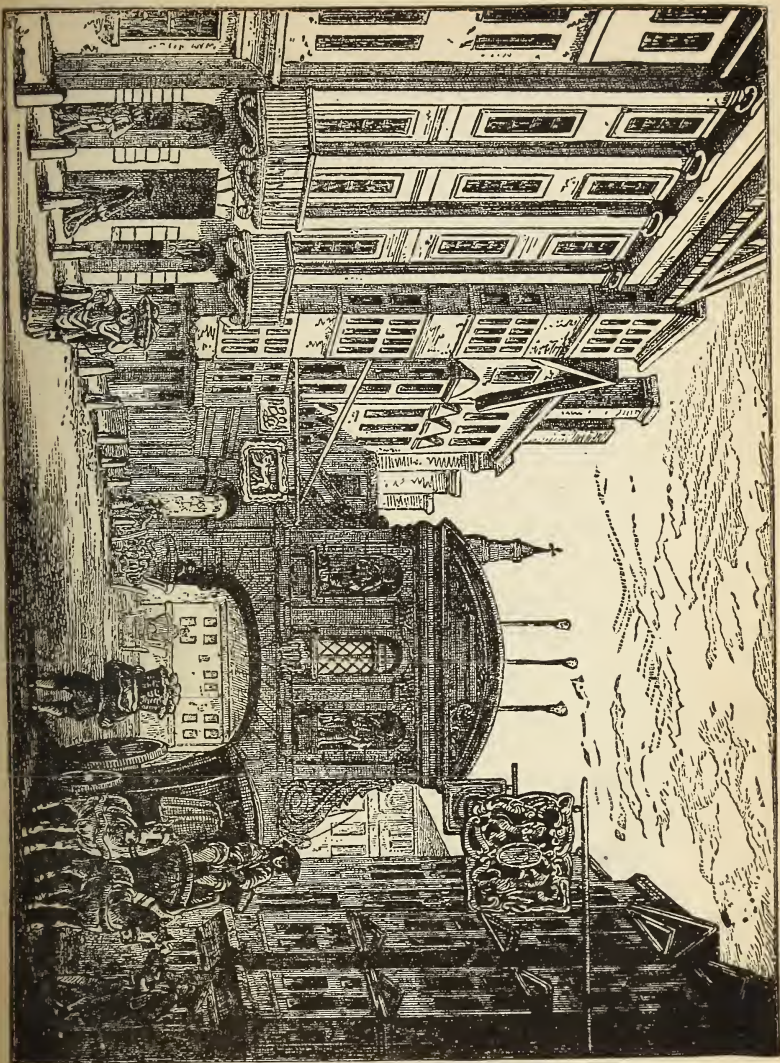
Some years later, a monument was erected by his daughter and Doctor Hall, in the parish church of Stratford. It consists of a half-length statue fitted into the wall above the tomb, which is near the altar of the church; though made of marble, it was painted so as to closely resemble the poet; "the hands and face were of flesh color, the eyes of a light hazel, and the hair and beard auburn; the doublet, or coat, was scarlet and covered with a loose black gown, or tabard, without sleeves."\*

About 1793, the bust was whitewashed over; but years afterwards the whitewash was removed, and the original colors were found to remain intact, as they do to this day. The bust is supposed to be a faithful likeness of the poet, and the fact that one side of the face is somewhat larger than the other, indicates that it was probably copied from a plaster cast actually moulded upon Shakespeare's face.

Upon the slab covering his tomb in the floor of the church is the following epitaph:

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\* *Britton, on Monumental bust of Shakespeare.* 1816.



Temple Bar and the "Devil Tavern."



Good frend for Jesvs sake forbear  
To digg the dvst enclosed heare,  
Blese be ye man yt spares thes stones,  
And cvrst be he yt moves my bones.

This inscription was intended to preserve Shakespeare's tomb, as in those days changes were often roughly and rudely made ; it is supposed that his remains would long since have been removed to Westminster Abbey but for this verse.

The last lineal descendant of Shakespeare was Elizabeth, daughter of Susanna and Doctor Hall. She married twice ; the last time becoming Lady Barnard ; but died in 1675, without children. At her death, "New Place," the home for which Shakespeare had labored and where his last years were spent, passed into the hands of strangers ; coming finally into the possession of a clergyman named Gastrell, who cared nothing for its associations but barbarously pulled it down, giving as an excuse that he had been tormented by visitors interested in the great poet's last dwelling-place ; it was known, however, that his real purpose was to escape paying the parish taxes. Determined to leave no trace of Shakespeare, he even uprooted the beautiful mulberry-tree which the poet had planted, with his own hands, in the garden. This desecration happened more than a century ago,\* but

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\* In the year 1759, it is said.

the site of the house has not been built upon and its foundations may still be seen.

The house in which Shakespeare was born has had a better fate ; as I have already told you, it still stands in Henley Street, in good condition, and has been used for some years as a museum. Within it we may see various pieces of furniture and household belongings once used by Shakespeare's family ; these are but a few relics connected with his daily life, gathered together in the spot which he loved ; but his works are for all time and all places, and teach new beauties and new truths to each succeeding generation.

It was not until the beginning of the Eighteenth century that strong interest in Shakespeare's life as well as his works, brought people to Stratford-upon-Avon for the great poet's sake ; then, famous men of the day searched for signs of his life. The little town grew celebrated. In 1769 the great actor, Garrick, inaugurated a festival at Stratford, in Shakespeare's honor. Not since the days of the revels at Kenilworth, an eye witness records, had such throngs of people been seen in the neighborhood of the little town. At day-break on September 6th, heralds and trumpeters roused all from their slumbers, and the Jubilee began ; all day long the entertainments lasted ; speeches and banquets during daylight, at night a brilliant mas-

querade and grand performance in the Shakespeare Hall took place. All Stratford rang with the poet's praises and honor.

More than half a century passed, and then in 1830 a second Jubilee was given ; the great feature of this one being a procession of the characters in Shakespeare's plays. *Falstaff, Shylock, Romeo, Othello*, all these and many others were seen in the quiet village streets, where their author had played as a boy. Still later, in 1864, the grandest of all celebrations took place ; singers, poets, authors, musicians, the great from many lands, assembled to do honor to the dead master of English poetry. Could that first band of players at Blackfriars have wakened to see their comrade thus honored, what would they have thought, I wonder ! Of them all, Ben Johnson alone seems to have guessed at what future generations would do for his friend, and to the closing chapter of Johnson's life we must turn now, before speaking further of Shakespeare's works.

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While Shakespeare lived peacefully at Stratford, poor Ben Jonson's life up in London had been going on not so prosperously. He had continued to write ; *Sejanus, Volpone, and The Silent Woman*, were among his best known plays, but he was poor, and ill in

health. At one time he visited the Scotch poet Drummond, at his beautiful country seat "Hawthornden," mentioned in a former chapter. There, the two conversed on all manner of literary subjects. Spenser, Sidney, Shakespeare and many others were discussed. Jonson had very strong feelings and prejudices and it would hardly do to take his opinion of every one, but I think he was always kindly and generous at heart.

There was then a famous old tavern in London called "The Devil" for what reason it is hard to say. Tavern signs in England are, even now, often whimsical and meaningless. The sign representing St. Dunstan tweaking the devil by the nose, hung out at a quaint house in Fleet Street, Number Two, and in the days of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, many famous men used to pass in at the doorway beneath. Jonson established a club, called "The Apollo," which held its meetings at "The Devil," and here he was the ruling spirit. Over the chimney-piece of the little room devoted to the gay meetings of the club were engraved in gold letters its rules and regulations from which I will quote a few lines :

"Let none but guests or clubbers hither come;  
Let dunces, fools, and sordid men keep home;  
Let learned, civil, merry men b' invited,  
And modest too."

Besides the general members of "The Apollo," Jonson admitted twelve young men to be his "poetical sons," or, as they were sometimes called, "followers of the tribe of Ben."

Randolph, a young poet of the day, hearing much of these meetings at "The Devil," longed to be admitted ; but he had spent all his fortune, was shabby in dress and forlorn in appearance ; however, he resolved to try his chances, and one night when the club was in a gay good humor, he ventured to the door and timidly looked in. There sat the merry company. Jonson, huge in form and jovial of face, was presiding ; glancing up, the great dramatist caught sight of the new face peering in at the door : he roared out to Randolph to come in. The young poet drew back, conscious of his shabby, threadbare garments, and four members of the club instantly began rhyming upon his poverty-stricken appearance ; but Jonson cried out : "by the piper, I believe this is my own son, Randolph !" Meaning one of his poetical favorites ; and the young poet, admitting this, was cordially made welcome and soon known as one of the gay little club.\*

The Apollo Club was well known for many years after this ; but Jonson, though he had been made the

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\* He afterwards became a clergyman, and died young.

Poet Laureate of England, began to lose in health and friends, and poverty and disease seem to have come to him together. In his old age he wrote a pastoral drama, *The Sad Shepherd*, in which we see him becoming gentle and tender as his last days drew near. The efforts of a rival had lost him the favor of the Court, but when he was in dire distress, ill, almost dying, the Duke of New Castle gave him some help; he wrote for a special performance his last play, *The New Inn*, which was not a success, but the epilogue contains these touching lines:

If you expect more than you had to-night,  
The maker is sick and sad . . .  
All that his faint and falt'ring tongue doth crave,  
Is that you not impute it to his brain,  
That's yet unhurt, altho' set round with pain,  
It cannot long hold out.

Is not this a very sad picture? It was some years after Shakespeare's death, or we may be sure poor Jonson would not have been so lonely, and sick at heart in his last hours. He had lived and written his last lines in a house close to Westminster Abbey, which, an old writer (Aubrey) tells us, "you pass in going from the church-yard to the old palace;" there in 1637, he died, and was buried in the Abbey.

While the stone mason was fitting the slab to the

"There sat the merry company."





tomb, "Jack Young," one of Jonson's obscure admirers passed by and gave him eighteen pence (about thirty-seven cents) for carving upon it the now famous words : "O RARE BEN JONSON."

. . . . .

The works of Shakespeare show us a genius of the highest type. They combine so much that it would be impossible to criticise or even characterize them in a few words. The coarseness of the age in which he wrote was likely to influence any author but it affected Shakespeare only slightly. Whatever coarseness we find in his writings we must look upon as due to the period ; words and phrases then commonly used are now considered vulgar and even gross, but, passing over this, we must think only of the wonderful combination of the genius. His plays give evidence of every phase of thought and feeling possible to the human mind. His characters represent every type of human nature. No writer ever has excelled Shakespeare in imagination, in tenderness, pathos or tragedy ; in philosophy, humanity, or a conception of the sublime. To thoroughly understand his writings the experiences of a lifetime are needed ; but all can enjoy them. No quotations I could give you in this space would do more than illustrate certain points in his style, but you shall have two extracts, one from

the *Merchant of Venice*, written in 1598; and one from *King John* written in 1598 also, in which the *sublime*, and the *pathetic* in Shakespeare's style are represented.

The plays were written in three or four periods; but they give us but a slight clue to his life and character. In the last period perhaps we can see how Shakespeare's life was saddened by the death or ruin of several of his friends; Southampton, Essex and Pembroke.

*Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Julius Cæsar*, belong to this period. In the *Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*, written almost at the last, we see how his fine imagination was untouched by time.

With Ben Jonson it was different. His last efforts were unequal to his first — perhaps this was because, as he said, he was tired and sick at heart. His style was always powerful, and his originality great; but his genius weakened as he grew old, and poverty and disease came together. Some of his Court Masques were popular long after his death. From one of them, *The Golden Age Restored*, I will make a few extracts, so that you may observe not only his style, in light efforts, but that of the Masque belonging to the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James I.

SCENE FROM THE MERCHANT OF VENICE. [*Act III.*]

Portia, disguised as a lawyer, is defending her husband's friend Antonio from the cruel demands of Shylock, a Jewish money-lender. Antonio has borrowed from this man three thousand ducats, with the agreement that if the money is not repaid on a certain day, the Jew is to have a pound of Antonio's flesh. At the opening of this scene, the day has come and Antonio cannot pay. Portia's husband, Bassanio, has offered to pay for him, but the Jew refuses, saying that he does not want money and will have only the pound of flesh from the body of Antonio, whom he hates.

*Por.* Do you confess the bond?

*Ant.* I do.

*Por.* Then must the Jew be merciful.

*Shy.* On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

*Por.* The quality of mercy is not strain'd;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath; it is twice bless'd;  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes  
The throned monarchy better than his crown;  
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,  
The attribute to awe and majesty,  
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;  
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,  
It is enthroned in the heart of kings,  
It is an attribute to God himself;

And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,  
Though justice be thy plea, consider this—  
That in the course of justice, none of us  
Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy ;  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of mercy. I have spoken thus much,  
To mitigate the justice of thy plea ;  
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice  
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

*Shy.* My deeds upon my head ! I crave the law,  
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

*Por.* Is he not able to discharge the money ?

*Bass.* Yes, here I tender it for him in the court ;  
Yea, twice the sum : if that will not suffice,  
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,  
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart :  
If this will not suffice, it must appear  
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,  
Wrest once the law to your authority :  
To do a great right do a little wrong ;  
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

*Por.* It must not be ; there is no power in Venice  
Can alter a decree established :

'T will be recorded for a precedent ;  
And many an error, by the same example,  
Will rush into the state : it cannot be.

*Shy.* A Daniel come to judgment ! yea, a Daniel !  
O wise young judge, how do I honor thee !

Portia then bids the Jew cut his pound of flesh, but reminds him it was not in the bond that he should shed a drop of blood, and should he do so, he would be tried for murder. The play therefore ends with Shylock's confusion and Antonio's triumph.

SCENE FROM KING JOHN. [Act IV.]

The king has commanded Hubert, his chamberlain, to put out the eyes of Prince Arthur, the rightful heir to the throne, whom he has displaced.

*Hub.* Good morning, little prince.

*Arth.* As little prince (having so great a title To be more prince,) as may be.—You are sad.

*Hub.* Indeed, I have been merrier.

*Arth.* Mercy on me !

Methinks, nobody should be sad but I :

Yet, I remember, when I was in France,

Young gentlemen would be as sad as night,

Only for wantonness. By my christendom,

So I were out of prison, and kept sheep,

I should be as merry as the day is long ;

And so I would be here, but that I doubt

My uncle practises more harm to me :

He is afraid of me, and I of him :

Is it my faith that I was Geoffrey's son ?

No, indeed, is 't not ; And I would to heaven

I were your son, so you would love me, Hubert.

*Hub.* If I talk to him, with his innocent prate

He will awake my mercy, which lies dead :

Therefore I will be sudden, and dispatch. [*Aside.*

*Arth.* Are you sick, Hubert ? you look pale to-day :

In sooth, I would you were a little sick ;

That I might sit all night and watch with you :

I warrant I love you more than you do me.

*Hub.* His words do take possession of my bosom.—

Read here, young Arthur. [*Shewing a paper.*

How now, foolish rheum [*Aside.*

Turning spiteous torture out of door !

I must be brief ; lest resolution drop

Out at mine eyes, in tender womanish tears.

Can you not read it? is it not fair writ?

*Arth.* Too fairly, Hubert, for so foul effect :

Must you with hot irons burn out both mine eyes ?

*Hub.* Young boy, I must.      *Arth.* And will you?

*Hub.* And I will.

*Arth.* Have you the heart? When your head did

I knit my hand-kercher about your brows, ( but ake,

(The best I had, a princess wrought it me,)

And I did never ask it you again :

And with my hand at midnight held your head :

And, like the watchful minutes to the hour,

Still and anon cheer'd up the heavy time :

Saying, What lack you? and, Where lies your grief?

Or, What good love may I perform for you?

Many a poor man's son would have lain still.

And ne'er have spoken a loving word to you :

But you at your sick service had a prince.

Nay, you may think my love was crafty love.

And call it, cunning ; do, and if you will :

If heaven be pleased that you must use me ill,

Why, then you must.—Will you put out mine eyes?

These eyes, that never did nor never shall,

So much as frown on you?

*Hub.* I have sworn to do it;

And with hot irons must I burn them out.

*Arth.* Ah, none, but in this iron age, would do it !

The iron of itself, though heat red-hot,

Approaching near these eyes, would drink my tears.

'And quench his fiery indignation,

Even in the matter of mine innocence :

Nay, after that, consume away in rust,

But for containing fire to harm mine eye.

Are you more stubborn-hard than hammer'd iron?

And if an angel should have come to me,

And told me, Hubert should put out mine eyes,

I would not have believ'd him. No tongue but Hubert's—

Hubert finally yields to Arthur's pathetic entreaties : the play ends with the death of King John.

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Ben Jonson, besides writing various poems and dramas, and establishing a regular system for comedies, wrote many famous masques. These were usually performed on such occasions as marriages in high life, or great Court festivals, and were allegorical ; the characters representing virtues or vices, mythological personages, or sometimes famous men of a previous generation. One of Jonson's masques was entitled *The Golden Age Restored*, and was performed at Court by "the lords and gentlemen, the king's servants," as a compliment to King James I.

It opens with loud music : then *Pallas*, or Minerva, descends in a chariot to softer music.

*Pallas* :

Look, look ! rejoice and wonder  
That you, offending mortals, are  
(From all your crimes) so much the care  
Of him that bears the thunder.

Meaning Jove : she then goes on to say that Jove intends to give the world a Golden Age. Here, a tumult and clashing of arms is heard behind the scenes.

But hark ! what tumult from yond' cave is heard ?

What noise, what strife, what earthquake and alarms,

As troubled Nature for her maker feared  
And all the Iron Age were up in arms !

*Pallas* retires behind a cloud, and the *Iron Age* appears, a strong iron-clad man who calls up all the *Evils*.

Come forth, come forth, do we not hear  
What purpose and how worth our fear  
The king of gods hath on us ?  
He is not of the Iron breed,  
That would, though Fate did help the deed,  
Let Shame in so upon us.

Which of you would not in a war  
Attempt the price of any scar,  
To keep your own states even ?  
But here, which of you is that he,  
Would not himself the weapon be,  
To rein Jove and heaven ?

About it, then, and let him feel  
The Iron Age is turned to steel,  
Since he begins to threat her :  
And though the bodies here are less  
Than were the giants ; he'll confess  
Our malice is far greater.

The *Evils* enter, in various costumes, and perform a dance to martial music, in the midst of which *Pallas* reappears, holding up her shield. The *Evils* are turned to statues.

*Pallas* :

\* \* \* \* \*

Die, all that can remain of you but stone  
And that be seen awhile and then be none.

Now, now descend, you both beloved of Jove  
And of the good on earth no less the love.

The scene changes.

Descend, you long, long wished and wanted pair,  
And as your softer times divide the air,  
So shake all clouds off with your golden hair ;  
For spite is spent : the Iron Age is fled,  
And with her power on earth, her name is dead.

*Astræa* and the *Golden Age* descend singing : *Pallas* assures them that they will be well received by the people of earth ; for

If not, they harm themselves, not you.

She then summons the spirits of *Chaucer*, *Gower*, *Lydgate* and *Spenser*, who all appear.

*Chaucer and Gower.* We come.

*Lydgate and Spenser.* We come.

*All.* Our best of fire,

Is that which *Pallas* doth inspire.

They take part in the general rejoicing that earth is to have a Golden Age once more, and disappear : After which a beautiful dance, by the ladies and gentlemen of the company, takes place.

*Pallas.* Already do not all things smile ?

*Astræa.* But then they have enjoy'd a while

The Age's quickening power :

*Age.* That every thought a seed doth bring,

And every look a plant doth spring,  
And every breath a flower :  
*Pallas.* The earth unploughed shall yield her crop,  
Pure honey from the oak shall drop,  
The fountain shall run milk :  
The thistle shall the lily bear,  
And every bramble roses wear,  
And every worm make silk.

## VI.

## FRANCIS BACON.

Bacon's Boyhood at York House — Early Glimpses of Court Splendors — Queen Elizabeth and her "Young Lord Keeper" — The Queen at Dinner — Bacon's Education — Death of his Father and Ungenerous Conduct of his Uncle — Bacon in Parliament — His Strange Ingratitude to the Earl of Essex — Execution of Essex and Death of the Queen — Bacon's Marriage, and Brilliant Career at Court — Literature and Science at Corhambury — Bacon's Guilt and Terrible Downfall — Ben Jonson's View of Him — His Last Days.

YOU have seen how Poetry and the Drama flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, but you must not suppose that literature was confined to these two modes of composition.

While Shakespeare and Ben Jonson were writing plays, one of the greatest philosophers the world has ever known grew famous. This was Francis Bacon.

He was born in high life; he had great ambitions; his character was a strange mixture of greatness and meanness; he established what is called a new system of philosophy; he was one of the most eloquent speakers ever listened to in the House of Commons; he received the highest honors and the lowest degradation his country could bestow. With all this you may well imagine that the story of his career is a curious one.

We must turn away from Blackfriar's Theatre, from the narrow Holywell Street where the players lived, from Southwark, from the "Mermaid" and "Devil" taverns; for we are now going into court society among the fine ladies and gentlemen of Elizabeth's reign. Passing under Temple Bar and down the Strand in 1540 you would have come upon a stately mansion set back from the street, with a brick-walled garden and a heavy iron gateway. Any lounging about could have told you that this was York House, the residence of Sir Nicholas Bacon, the Keeper of the Queen's Seal.

Great doings went on within those stately walls. When the Queen honored her Lord-Keeper with a visit every tiny window-pane was illuminated, banners were hung out, and gorgeous banquets were prepared in the great hall. Dances sometimes took place

there, and masques, and the sounds of revelry could be heard even by the boatmen far out on the river Thames which flowed past the lower gardens of the house.

Lady Bacon was a great favorite at court. She was one of the noted learned women of the day, reading and writing Greek and Latin and Hebrew more readily than many college graduates could do to-day. It may seem strange to you that the women of Queen Elizabeth's time should have been such fine classical and Italian scholars. Lady Bacon, I think, could have shown you a reason for this in her own bookshelves. If she had *not* understood those languages and could not have read Plato and Homer and Virgil and Cicero and Boccaccio and Petrarch, what would there have been for her to read in her own tongue? She undoubtedly possessed every important English book that had been printed in her day, and could have shown you the works of Gower and Chaucer, some sermons and homilies, some quaint old ballads, and, perhaps, a few specimens of English prose and verse earlier than Chaucer's. But all these she could have read through from beginning to end many times in a month; so that, naturally, in those days people who were fond of reading used to go back to the Latin authors.

Lady Bacon was one of three very famous sisters, daughters of the tutor of King Edward the Sixth. One of her sisters was married to Lord Burleigh, the Queen's Prime Minister ; the other became Lady Kiligrew and was noted for her wit and learning ; while Lady Bacon, as the wife of the Keeper of the Great Seal, was much at court and constantly surrounded by splendor and outward greatness. The life at York House itself was a stately one and full of court manners, and the great end and aim of all the fine people who visited Lady Bacon was to be high in Court favor. It is necessary for you to remember this in thinking of Bacon's strange career ; for he was, as a little child, introduced to it all.

Francis Bacon was born at York House in 1561, seven years after Elizabeth came to the throne. He was the youngest son of Sir Nicholas and Lady Bacon, and when a mere child showed every sign of precocious talent. A beautiful clever boy, full of witty speeches quite beyond his years, what wonder his mother proudly took him with her to court where he, of course, attracted the Queen's attention ? His sayings so amused Her Majesty that she used playfully to call him her "Young Lord-Keeper." Thus as a boy Bacon's eyes and ears were filled with court splendor and patronage. The Ladies-in-Waiting petted and made much of him ; he was allowed to join



Francis Bacon.



in the great court festivals, to hear the speeches of courtiers both in the Queen's presence and behind her back. Everything, indeed, was a ceremonial of homage to the Queen. A German traveller named Hentzner, who wrote about his experiences in England, was much impressed by what he saw at court, and the sketch he made of Her Majesty's dinner will alone serve to show you the court life of that day.

"While the Queen was at prayers in the antechapel, a gentleman entered the room having a rod, and along with him another who had a table-cloth, which, after they had both knelt three times with the utmost veneration, he spread upon the table, and after kneeling again they both retired. Then came two others, one with the rod again, the other with a salt-cellar, a plate, and bread. When they had knelt as the others had done and placed what was brought upon the table, they also retired with the same ceremonies performed by the first. At last came an unmarried lady, — we were told she was a countess, — and along with her a married one bearing a toasting-knife; the former was dressed in white silk, who, when she had prostrated herself three times in the most graceful manner, approached the table and rubbed the plates with bread and salt with as much care as if the Queen had been there.

"When they had waited there a little while the

yeomen of the guard entered, bareheaded, clothed in scarlet with a golden rose upon their backs, bringing in at each turn a course of twenty-four dishes served in plate, most of it gilt. These dishes were received by a gentleman in the same order they were brought and placed upon the table, while the lady taster gave to each of the guard a mouthful to eat of the particular dish he had brought for fear of any poison.

“During the time that this guard were bringing dinner twelve trumpets and two kettle-drums made the hall ring for half-an-hour together. At the end of all this ceremonial, a number of married ladies appeared who, with particular solemnity, lifted the meat off the table and conveyed it into the Queen’s inner and more private chamber, when, after she had chosen for herself, the rest went to the ladies of the court. The Queen dined and supped alone with very few attendants, and it was seldom that anybody, native or foreigner, was admitted at that time, and then only at the intercession of somebody in power.”

It was in life of this kind that young Francis Bacon was educated. At the age of twelve he went to college; at sixteen he traveled upon the Continent, and then returned, to enter Gray’s Inn as a law student.

Gray’s Inn was a large building not very far from

the Strand, where the students lived and studied. They dined together in the great hall, where also they used to give masques and grand entertainments on festival days. The Inn was built round a court in which were (and still are) beautiful gardens, which were, in the Sixteenth century, a favorite resort of courtiers and men of fashion as well as of the students themselves ; and here Francis Bacon's tall figure and grave young face were familiar to all as he paced to and fro of a summer's evening under the trees.

Lady Bacon at this time was living in the country and used to write anxious letters to her son. Reading them now you would smile to see how like they are, in small ways, to letters of to-day. From one we see that Francis has had a severe cold — she begs he will wrap up well in woolen clothes if he goes out into the gardens. Again she speaks of an herb tea, or special drink “better than malt.” I wonder if the young man paid much heed to all this affectionate advice ! The pleasure-seekers in the gardens were gorgeously dressed in satins and velvets, and I doubt if young Bacon liked to appear beneath the trees in heavy garments of wool.

There came soon an anxious period for the young man ; for his father died suddenly and he saw the ne-

cessity of earning money. Naturally he applied to his powerful uncle, Lord Burleigh, for a position at court; but it is supposed that the Prime Minister was jealous of his brilliant young nephew, for he kept putting off his petitions in spite of the continued remonstrances of friends. The old lord lived in great state not far from York House, and the Queen so honored him that when he was confined to his chair with the gout Her Majesty condescended to sit with him for an hour at a time. In spite of all this he grudged any influence in behalf of his nephew.

Bacon, however, had made a powerful friend at court. This was the Earl of Essex, who stood high in the favor of the Queen. From the commencement of their friendship Essex did all that lay in his power to advance Bacon's interests. He not only gave him a fine property, but used all his influence for him at court.

Many stories are told of his loyalty to Bacon's interests. One day he was returning from court in the same coach with Burleigh's son, Sir Robert Cecil.

"My Lord," said Sir Robert, "the Queen has determined to appoint an Attorney General without more delay. I pray your lordship to let me know whom you will favor."

"What!" said Essex, "I wonder at your question.



The Hall of Gray's Inn.



You cannot but know that, resolutely, against all the world, I stand for your cousin, Francis Bacon."

Cecil was very angry ; but Essex only continued to praise and extol his friend's genius and abilities until the jealous cousin, from mere shame, was silenced.

At last Bacon obtained, through Burleigh's influence, the promise of a political office when it should fall vacant, and with this in view he entered Parliament. There his eloquence must have been marvelous ; for Ben Jonson said that, in listening to him, the only fear in men's minds was that he should leave off too soon.

Bacon kept his attention fixed upon court patronage and the public favor, and tried to steer his way adroitly between the two. I fancy those early days of his boyhood when the Queen had called him her "Young Lord-Keeper" were always in his mind. He had two ambitions — high public office and literature, — and from the commencement of his life as a man he looked to reaching the greatest in both.

By this time the fortunes of Essex began to darken. Your history will tell you how the Queen's favor was lost ; how Essex was accused of treason. Those were strange dark days, when it was hard to appear loyal both to his friend and to his queen, yet Bacon's part in the affair seems incredible. It is true he tried

in vain to reconcile Her Majesty to Essex at first, and when the Earl was finally put upon trial, everyone expected Bacon either to attempt his defense or to withdraw from the case. Fancy the astonishment and horror of the nation when he actually appeared in court against the unhappy Essex !

At this distance of time we cannot judge of all the circumstances, yet the great fact remains unchanged, — Essex had been Bacon's sworn friend ; he was on trial for his life, and Bacon publicly appeared against him. The Earl was executed. It is said he uttered few reproaches to his former friend, but the nation was indignant. The Queen was nervous and ill at ease after her favorite's death, and commanded Bacon to write an account of his accusations against Essex, which he did, thus adding another charge of ingratitude to his own account.

The Queen grew dejected, irritable, unhappy. She was ill but refused to admit the fact. She would sit bolstered up, near to the arras \* of her room, with a sword at her side, which she repeatedly thrust into the tapestry, fancying murderers were there concealed. Her old friends fell off ; those who remained half feared the dying Queen whose court had been so stately, so learned and yet so dangerous.

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\* In fine houses the walls were hung with arras or embroidered cloth.

Shakespeare and Ben Jonson were still living, and Bacon's fame was just rising, when, in 1603, after some days of hushed whispering horror in the court, it was known that Elizabeth was dead.

When James I. ascended the throne Francis Bacon was among the first to be knighted by the king, and with his new title he sought in marriage the handsome and wealthy daughter of one Alderman Barnham, who did not refuse the rising young statesman.

We must pass over many details of Bacon's public life. He attached himself to King James' great favorite, Villiers, Duke of Buckingham ; and, it is said, used every means to keep the royal favor. One honor after another was accorded to him, and in 1617 he was made Keeper of the Great Seal.

Queen Elizabeth's words, uttered in his childhood, must have rung in Bacon's ears when they brought the news of his appointment to him at York House.

In the month of May he was to open the courts in state, and by early morning all London was up and eager with excitement. The procession formed at Gray's Inn. Bacon rode forth proudly, dressed in the suit he had worn on his wedding-day, — a superb violet satin, richly embroidered and ablaze with the jeweled chain and ornaments of his rank and honor, — on his right was the Lord Treasurer, on his left

the Privy Seal. They were escorted by the Lords of the King's Household, the Lords of the Council, the Judges and Sergeants; and following them a great procession of magnificently apparelled gentlemen, — dukes and earls, barons and knights.

As this gorgeous cavalcade passed through the streets crowds of people joined in. All who could by any chance procure a horse rode one; banners were hung out; the players from Bankside Theatre followed in their finest array. All London seemed to be bent upon the one object, and Bacon riding at the head, as it were of all the city, watched eagerly and curiously.

At the gates of Westminster Hall the procession halted. There Bacon alighted, followed by the train of gentlemen and as many as could press forward with them. Entering the court he took his seat upon the judge's bench. The criers advanced striking the ground with their maces; they commanded silence, and Bacon addressed the court.

But still higher honors were in store for Bacon. He was created Chancellor of the Realm and also made a peer, with the title of Baron Verulam, Viscount St. Albans. Nevertheless it is as Francis Bacon the philosopher he is known to-day. Ben Jonson has given us, in rhyme, a picture of the Chancellor's sixti-



Gray's Inn Gardens.



eth birthday festival at York House when all about him, Jonson says, seemed to smile, "the fire, the house, the wine."

Bacon seemed to be at the very summit of prosperity, and having published part of his great book, the *Novum Organum*, he was famous also in the field of Literature.

Turning from public life at London he used to pass many happy hours at his country-place, Gorhambury, where gardening and literature together amused and occupied him. Certain young men of talent were invited to pass the summer evenings with him ; and while the great statesman and philosopher walked about under the trees they accompanied him, discussing or noting down what he told them.

These were Bacon's happiest hours. Had he been content with them we might now look only at the good and greatness in his life ; but soon after his triumphant anniversary at York House, it began to be whispered about that there was great corruption among the public officers of the Crown, that the judges were taking bribes. Who was in the wrong? One name after another was mentioned. Fancy the horror of the nation when, first in whispers, then in a loud outcry, it was told that Lord Bacon was guilty of taking bribes, of corrupting the court.

Perhaps at this day we can not judge fairly of Bacon's guilt in the matter. Many writers have tried to show that he was slandered ; certain it is that in his own time the accusation was brought against him and he did not try to defend himself. He was so weak and ill when they summoned him to Westminster to hear the verdict that he could not move. He had written and signed a confession of his crime. The lords who were judging him found it hard to believe that it was really his own writing, and they sent a committee to him to ask if indeed it might be believed.

"My lords," said the unhappy Bacon, "it is my act, my hand, my heart. I beseech your lordships to be merciful to a broken reed !"

The King was merciful ; and indeed no one seemed anxious to humiliate the fallen statesman. When the sentence of a heavy fine and imprisonment in the Tower was pronounced, the King remitted it. Bacon was deprived of his high office, and, broken in spirit and ill in health, he retired to Gray's Inn, there devoting himself to the life he really loved — study and science.

"My conceit of his person," said Ben Jonson, "was never increased towards him by his place or honors ; but I have and do reverence him for his greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he

seemed to me ever by his work one of the greatest men and most worthy of admiration that had been in my eyes. In his adversity I ever prayed God would give him strength, for greatness he could not want."

In the last years of his life Bacon began a work on Law and a "History of England under the Tudors," besides going on with his philosophical works and researches.

He met his death in making an experiment. He desired to try the effect of cold in preventing putrefaction in animal matter; and one very cold day, when driving in the country near Highgate, he stopped at the house of a cottager and bought a fowl, which he proceeded to stuff with snow. A sudden chill seized him and he was taken to the house of Earl Arundel near by, where he became violently ill, and on the morning of Easter day, 1626, breathed his last.

Bacon's genius greatly influenced the literature of the age in which he lived and the one following. His system of philosophy is known as the "Inductive Method" of reasoning, and was considered in his own day as entirely original. This has been questioned by later students; but there can be no question of his extraordinary power both as a thinker and a writer.

The amount of his work would form a small library

in itself. The styles are various, and, as a great critic has said of him, he put enough thought into one paragraph to make a volume.

Literature and Philosophy were what Nature had fitted him for ; and it is as a writer, not as a statesman, we should think of Francis Bacon.

CONTEMPORARIES OF BACON.

FRANCIS BACON, Baron Verulam, commonly called Lord Bacon, 1561 — 1625. Philosopher and Statesman; wrote several books upon Law, a volume of Essays for popular reading, a collection of Apothegms, and, in Latin, *De Sapientia Veterum* or "The Wisdom of the Ancients," and his greatest work, *Instauratio Magna*, "Restoration of the Sciences," which includes his famous *Novum Organum*, or New Scientific Method, etc.

ROGER ASCHAM, 1515 — 1569, Tutor of Queen Elizabeth. Wrote "The Schoolmaster," (on education) and "Toxophilus" (on the game of archery.)

JOHN NAPIER. 1550 — 1617. Invented the system of Logarithms; wrote "A Plain Discovery of the Whole Revelation of St. John;" "Secret Inventions, etc.

JOHN STOW. 1525 — 1605. Antiquarian: Wrote "Survey of London;" "Annals of England;" "Summary of English Chronicles.

ROBERT BURTON. 1576 — 1640. A quaint and learned writer; spent nearly his whole life upon one book, his famous "Anatomy of Melancholy."

WILLIAM CAMDEN. 1551 — 1623. Antiquarian and scholar; wrote "Britannia," (description of Great Britain;) "Annals of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth," etc.

SIR ROBERT BRUCE COTTON. 1570 — 1631. Famous antiquarian writer and collector; founded the "Cottonian Library," now preserved in the British Museum.

JOHN FOXE. 1517 — 1587. "The Martyrologist;" wrote "Foxe's Book of Martyrs."

JOHN KNOX. 1505—1572. Scottish Reformer; wrote "First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women;" "History of Reformation in Scotland," etc.

KING JAMES I. of England. 1556—1625. Wrote "The Counterblast to Tobacco," and some trifling poems and prose essays.

SIR RICHARD BAKER. 1568—1645. Wrote "Chronicles of the Kings of England," also some religious essays, etc.

JOHN DAVIS. — 1605. Famous navigator, and discoverer of Davis' Straits; wrote reports of his travels in several volumes, afterwards used in "Hakluyt's Voyages" (which see below).

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH. 1579—1631. Explorer and founder of Virginia, etc. Wrote "Description of New England;" "The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles;" "The True Travels, Adventures and Observations of Captain John Smith, in Europe, Asia, Africa and America, etc."

SAMUEL PURCHAS. 1577—1628. Scholar and compiler; wrote "Purchas, His Pilgrimage," and "Purchas's Pilgrims," books of travel and exploration, though the writer never traveled.

RICHARD HAKLUYT. 1553—1616. Clergyman and compiler; wrote "Hakluyt's Voyages."

THOMAS CORYAT. 1577—1617. Court jester; also traveler on foot through Europe and the East, of which he wrote several books.

GEORGE SANDYS. 1577—1643. Scholar and translator also traveled in the East and in America, and wrote of both.

SIR THOMAS WILSON. — 1581. Critic; wrote "Art of Logic," and "Art of Rhetoric."

SIR HENRY SAVILE. 1549—1621. Tutor in Mathematics and Greek to Queen Elizabeth; learned scholar and commentator.

SIR JOHN DAVIES. 1570—1626. Lord Chief Justice; wrote upon law and politics.

LORD EDWARD HERBERT. 1551 — 1648. Soldier, Statesman and Writer ; ( History, Religion and Poetry.)

PHILEMON HOLLAND. 1552 — 1636. Noted scholar and translator of Latin and Greek classics.

LADY ANNIE BACON. 1528 — 1600. The mother of Francis Bacon ; published several translations from Latin and Italian authors.

JOHN FLORIO. — 1625. Grammarian and translator ; wrote " Florio, his First Fruits," etc., (Compilation of Italian Proverbs,) " Dialogues of Grammar," and a Dictionary in Italian and English.

JOHN SPOTISWOOD. 1565 — 1639. Wrote " History of Church of Scotland."

REGINALD SCOTT. — 1599. Scholar and recluse ; wrote " A Perfect Platform of a Hop Garden," and " Discovery of Witchcraft."

LEONARD DIGGES. — 1573.<sup>1</sup> Mathematician. The son grandson and great-grandson of Digges were noted scholars between 1573 and 1639 ; they wrote various scientific and political works.

NICHOLAS SANDERS. 1527 — 1580. ROBERT PARSONS. 1546 — 1610, and RICHARD STAINHURST, 1545 — 1618, noted Catholic writers.

JOHN AYLMER. 1521 — 1594. RICHARD HOOKER. 1553 — 1600. Noted writers on the Episcopal side.

BANCROFT, BROUGHTON, FIELD, RAINOLDS, MILKS SMITH, ABBOTT, BILSON and BOYS were minor writers on religious subjects during the reigns of Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I.

NEWSPAPERS. In April, 1588, when England was threatened by the Spanish Armada, a series of Gazettes or Bulletins was printed by order of Queen Elizabeth, to keep her subjects informed as to the movements of the fleet ; these were published only occasionally ; but in the reign of James I. the news of Europe began to be collected and printed systematically, and a regular weekly paper called *The Certain News of this Present Week*,

was established in 1622, when the Thirty Years' War, and the exploits of Gustavus Adolphus agitated Europe. During the English Civil War (1642 — 1649), each army had its printer and published a newspaper. Many private newspapers were started at the same time in England, and from that day the press has been an established necessity.

#### TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE.

The first translation of the Bible into English was by Wycliffe, whose work was completed in 1382. Printing was not then known, and Wycliffe's Bible circulated in manuscript copies. William Tyndale, or Tyndal, translated the New Testament, and the Pentateuch and the Historical books of the Old Testament in 1480 — 1536; the first printed copy of his work appeared in 1525. Various versions of the Scripture were brought out before the one known as "King James' Version," which is commonly used by Protestants of to-day. This was made in 1611, by order of James I. The Catholic translation of the Scripture is known as the Rheims-Douay version, or Douay Bible, being made at Rheims, in France, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in 1582.

The Book of Common Prayer was compiled during the 16th century, chiefly from a very old prayer-book known as The Prymer.

## VII.

## JOHN MILTON AND JOHN BUNYAN.

Milton's birthplace — Early Puritan influences — School days at St. Paul's — Music over the Scrivener's shop—"The Lady" at Cambridge University — Life at Horton — Origin of the Masque of *Comus* — Travels in France and Italy — *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* — Milton's "garden house" and pupils at Aldersgate — His first marriage — Political troubles — Milton's reply to the King's pamphlet — Execution of Charles I. and triumph of the Roundheads — Milton becomes Foreign Secretary to the Commonwealth — Failure of his eyesight — Andrew Marvell his secretary — Death of Milton's wife and son — His total blindness — Marriage and death of his second wife — The Quaker's prophecy — Death and funeral of Oliver Cromwell — Restoration of Charles II., and peril of Milton — Publication of *Paradise Lost* and its cool reception — Milton's third marriage and last days at Bunhill Fields — Fate of daughter and descendants.

GOING down Cheapside, in London, the other day, I entered a certain narrow street which crosses the great thoroughfare ; it is now given up to warehouses, but standing there I could hear the sound of "Bow-bells," which have rung at the church of St.

Mary-le-Bow, near by, for centuries. The old church is being repaired at present, and men were coming and going to the work, passing through Bread street, where we stood under the shadow of one of the tall gloomy warehouses.

It was difficult to realize that in this very street, in a dark, quaint, old house, on the 9th of December 1608, JOHN MILTON, the author of PARADISE LOST was born.

The passer-by in those days (in the reign of James I) saw by a sign over the door that the profession of the elder Milton was that of scrivener, or one who drew up legal papers and placed money at interest. He was a man of learning, but his nature was rather narrow and gloomy, and to give you an idea of what he was I must tell you of a great moral change which swept over England about this time, affecting a large class of people, and the father of John Milton among the number.

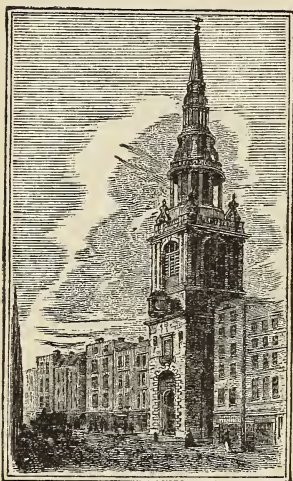
You remember that during Queen Elizabeth's reign efforts were made to put down the theatres. They did not entirely succeed, but still a large part of the nation objected to everything like theatrical display, and complained also of the extravagance at court, and of the growing wickedness and frivolity of all classes. By the time James I. came to the throne this love of

display and dissipation had greatly increased among the masses, and as I told you, even Shakespeare felt saddened by it.

Now whenever part of a nation believes there is a necessity for reform in any class, some extreme is sure to follow. The generation who were young at the time of Shakespeare's death were often preached to and talked at by those who held that all finery was sinful vanity, and all lightness of manner or speech ought to be condemned. We must not go into the religious side of this, for we are only tracing the literary part of England's history, and the influences which affected it.

The grave spirit of reform I speak of, grew up chiefly among the country people; and certain influential noblemen encouraged it, horrified, no doubt, by the wickedness at court, where, indeed, morality was a thing long forgotten. Preachers began to go about stirring up the people, who listened eagerly, and many believed that the wrath of God was about to descend upon the nation. Being for the most part unable to read, they thoroughly enjoyed the sermons which were now preached in the open fields, on the highways and by-ways, anywhere, indeed, where an audience could be gathered. Instead of the inn-yard plays they now had the travelling

preacher, who in loud and piercing tones would cry out to them that they were on the high road to Per-



ST. MARY LE BOW, CHEAPSIDE.

dition that every light word spoken was sin, every bit of finery suggested by the Devil. You can fancy how much all this would influence a people dependent so much more upon outward impressions than we are to-day. The very children were sometimes interrupted in their games by preachers who told them of the dreadful torments sure to follow upon such levity.

The Puritans, as these reformers were called, dressed with extreme simplicity, and met only for grave or religious discourse, shunning all manner of gaiety. In their homes they avoided decorative furniture, and bright colors, or graceful curves. They lived simple lives, earnest, no doubt, and full of religious observances, but rather gloomy and severe for the young people growing up around them.

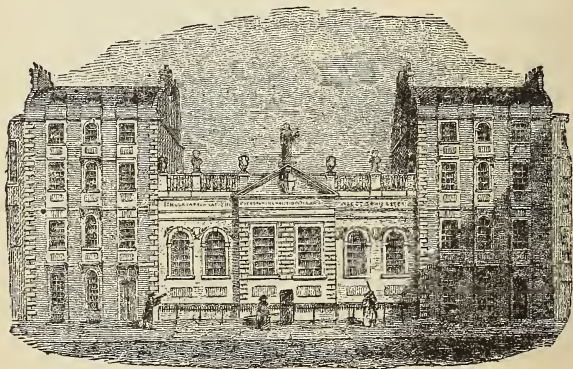
Of course all this met with opposition from the still large class of people devoted to the old ways of thinking, and you remember how a devoted band of Puritans sailed away in the "Mayflower" and founded the famous colony of New England, in 1620. Your history tells you, too, how strong the Puritan element became, a few years later, when Charles I. was beheaded and Cromwell governed England. Indeed so strongly were politics and literature associated at that time that most of the famous writers of the day were known also as either "Roundheads" or "Cavaliers."

Milton's father, as I have said, was a Puritan in spirit if not by profession, and throughout the long life of the poet we may trace the effect of these Puritan influences of his childhood.

He was sent at an early age to St. Paul's school, which stood then, as now, in the rear of the great cathedral, a few steps distant from his father's house; and in these daily walks it is quite probable that the school-boy sometimes saw Shakespeare and Ben Jonson on their way to those famous "wit combats" at the Mermaid tavern in Bread street. At school Milton studied Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and finally added Italian to the ordinary studies, in all of which he excelled.

I have said that the home influences of his child-

hood were of a gloomy kind, but there was one bright and cheerful element in the solemn household in Bread street—Milton's father loved music ; he had composed a great deal, for that day, and was a skillful performer on the organ and bass-viol. Young Milton learned them of his father, and the two passed many happy hours in the "sweet harmonies of sound " which Milton loved all his life. Above the scrivener's shop was a room devoted to various domestic uses : there the father and son shared their music, and perhaps to this tuneful side of his boyhood he



ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL.

owed his first impulses to write verses. He must have begun very young, but his real fame came late in life.

In 1625 he was sent to Cambridge University, where his extreme beauty of person attracted immediate attention, and the students dubbed him "the lady." He must have been marvelously handsome at this time. He never lost a certain beauty, both of feature and expression, but in his early years he was more like a *picture* of beautiful, gentle youth, than its reality. He was tall and finely made, though slender, with a fair complexion, perfect regularity of feature, and light brown hair parted in the centre and falling to his shoulders, according to the fashion of the day. His dress was simple, of black velvet with the broad linen collar, and upturned wristbands of the period. He was soon known at college for his verses. Of his short pieces written at this time, one was on Shakespeare, with whose works, then recently published in book form, he was very familiar. Among his other pieces were : "At a Solemn Music," "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," etc., all showing the extreme delicacy and refinement of Milton's mind.

Indeed he is a striking figure when we look at the University of those days. Most of the students led rollicking, lawless, self-indulgent lives. Milton, with his gentle, pensive countenance, his grave demeanor, and his growing genius, seems to stand apart ; does he not? When he left Cambridge, he says himself, he

was "free from all reproach, and approved by all honest men."



JOHN MILTON.

Meanwhile the elder Milton had left Bread street and gone to live at Horton, a pretty country place in Buckinghamshire, surrounded by wide green mead-

ows and rolling hills, with every variety of wild flower blooming in the hedgerows and fields. All this delighted young Milton, and he soon found congenial society in the neighborhood. Ludlow castle, the residence of the Earl of Bridgewater, was near by, and not only was the family of the Earl a pleasant one, but Henry Lawes, the musician, taught music in the household, and came frequently, as a guest, to Milton's house. On one such occasion he told them of an accident which had happened to the young people of the Earl's family: while passing through Haywood forest on their way home, Lady Alice and her brother were benighted, and the young lady was for some time lost in the wood. This incident suggested to Milton his masque of *Comus*. He wrote the poetry, Lawes composed the music, and the Earl had it performed at the castle, the young people themselves taking part.

Soon after this Milton travelled on the continent. In Florence and other Italian cities the young English poet was received with delight. His beauty, the elegance of his manners and conversation, were everywhere talked about, and his society was eagerly sought. He showed some of his poems to certain men of learning who pronounced them works of great genius. It is supposed that at this time he

wrote *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, two poems intended to represent *Joy* and *Sadness*, and containing some of his most beautiful thoughts.

All his life Milton looked back to those days in Italy with much happiness, yet he was too thoroughly English at heart to remain long in foreign courts, splendid and hospitable as they might be, and returning home he spent some years as a student at the University. We find him next in a "pretty garden house" of his own, at Aldersgate, in London, where he received a few pupils, his two nephews and some others, and about the same time he married a Miss Powell, a girl of seventeen, belonging to a Cavalier family. The strictness of Milton's household, and his stern views of life, irritated the young wife, accustomed to a country home where gaiety and light-heartedness reigned. She quarrelled with her husband, and he with her, and she finally returned to her father; but later she was reconciled to Milton, and seems to have made him a good and dutiful wife.

These were stormy times in England. "Round-heads" and "Cavaliers" began to be well known and among them, of course, the writers of the day were conspicuous. Milton very openly declared himself against the Royalists' cause, and used all his powers as a writer to further the liberties of his countrymen.

In 1649, as your history tells you, the King ascended the scaffold at Whitehall, uttering that one word, "Remember," which no one has ever understood or forgotten. The Commonwealth began. Cromwell established himself in Whitehall Palace, in the King's old apartments, and here his councils met. By this time Milton had made himself famous all over Europe, by answering a pamphlet called *Eikon Basilike*, ["The Royal Image,"] which had been written in defence of Charles I., many thought by the King himself, but in reality by a Doctor Landen.

Milton was at once recognized as a Republican and a Puritan, and he was made Foreign Secretary to the Council. Much of his time was now spent at Whitehall, where Dryden, the poet, then a young man, Waller, and many gifted men used to come together, and we are told they sometimes indulged in a little organ music, the only amusement the Protector encouraged. Life was rather narrow and severe in those days; the houses were stately enough, but the revels of the Sixteenth century were not known.

Not long ago I walked through one of Cromwell's houses and saw its oak wainscotted walls and ceilings, its carved stair cases, and its innumerable small rooms, opening one into the other, all indicating that in the Seventeenth century comfort in household matters was not neglected. The ceilings were richly

carved, in spite of Puritan severity, and the walls were hung with rich old tapestries. The famous Holland House was built at this time. In its gardens Cromwell used to walk and confer with his councilors ; and at a house near London, a large, beautiful brick mansion, his daughter lived ; and a room is still shown there where Cromwell held secret conclaves.

Milton, we may presume, often attended these, for he was highly honored by the Protector, and was certainly devoted to his cause.

In 1650 Milton's eyesight began to fail, and an assistant named Andrew Marvell was engaged for him. Later the same Marvell became well known as a poet. His home was a pretty cottage at Highgate, which exists to this day, and it is said there was a secret passage connecting it with Cromwell House, where Treton and his wife (Cromwell's daughter) resided.

Meanwhile Milton had removed to a pleasant house in York street (now No. 19,) where he spent some years. It was here that he lost his infant son by death, and, two years later, his wife. He was left with three little girls, the eldest of whom was ten. His incessant literary work increased the trouble with his eyes, until, in 1654, total blindness fell upon him. Soon after this he married and brought a cheerful influence into his sad little household, but the new wife

soon died, and other troubles were beginning for the poet.

Cromwell had been sick for months, an intermittent fever hanging upon him. Andrew Marvell, often near him, noted how he fought it off, and George Fox, a famous leader in the new sect of Quakers, tells how he met the Protector riding one day from Hampton Court, trying to look well, but a waft of death seemed to reach him. You have all heard how the Quaker's prophecy was fulfilled, when, on the 3d of September, 1668, after a storm which tore roofs from houses, and levelled huge trees in every forest, Oliver Cromwell breathed his last.

There were two men at court at that time who kept diaries which have since been published, and become famed books. These were John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys. Evelyn gives in his diary an account of the funeral of the Protector, who, in spite of the severe simplicity of his life, was buried with almost regal honors. "He was carried," says Evelyn, "in a velvet bed of state drawn by six horses, housed by the same; the pall held up by his new lords; Oliver lying in effigie in royal robes, and crowned with a crown, sceptre and globe, like a King. The pendants and guidons were carried by the officers of the army; and the imperial banner achievement, etc., by

the heralds in their coats ; a rich compareason'd horse, embroidered all over with gold ; a knight of honor armed cap-a-pie, and after all, his guards, soldiers, and innumerable mourners. In this equipage they proceeded to Westminster ; but it was the joyfulest funeral I ever saw, for there were none that cried but dogs, which the soldiers hooted away with a barbarous noise, drinking and taking tobacco in the streets as they went."

Up to this time Milton had continued to perform his duties as Secretary, at Whitehall, aided by Marvell ; but when Cromwell died and the new King, Charles II., ascended the throne, in 1660, the poet's life was in the greatest danger ; his printed reply to the *Eikon Basilike* was publicly burnt by the common hangman, and he was thrown into prison. Through the influence of Sir William Davenant, whom he had once befriended, a pardon was obtained from the King, but from this time Milton's life was no longer prosperous. He lost most of his fortune, his house was burned in the great fire of London, and in his declining years he had to bear with blindness, poverty, and domestic discord.

He now turned all his attention to literature. In 1658 he had begun to write his famous work, *Paradise Lost*, upon which he now continued to labor. It was

not published until 1667, and in the British Museum you can see, to-day, a copy of the agreement between Milton and his publisher made in that year. Twenty pounds (about one hundred dollars) was all that he or his family ever received for the copyright ; and in eleven years from the date of its publication three thousand copies had been sold. It is said that when three book-sellers near St. Dunstons had *Paradise Lost* for sale, it lay for months unnoticed, and but for the accident of a nobleman of learning recommending it to his friends, it would have been unread by all that generation ; but this may not have been the case, for comparatively few people, at that time, ever purchased books. In the forty-two years between the publication of Shakespeare's works and *Paradise Lost*, only one thousand copies of Shakespeare were sold ; so that Milton was not, as many critics declare, specially slighted. The poem was at first objected to, because it was written in blank verse and rhyme was preferred. Much discussion followed its publication ; however, before a century had passed away, it was established as one of the greatest works of genius the world had ever known.

Milton had finished *Paradise Lost* in a little cottage at Chalfont ; but later he established himself in a small home near Bunhill Fields. He had married a

third time, by the advice of friends who felt that his household needed a mother's care. But the marriage was not a happy one, though the poet seems to have lived contented enough with his fate. Many younger men of the day came to him to read and converse. One of these, John Elwood, has left us an account of his visits, from which I will quote :

“He received me courteously, as well for the sake of Dr. Paget, who introduced me, as of Isaac Pennington, who recommended me, to both of whom he bore a good respect; and having inquired divers things of me with respect to my former progressions in learning, he dismissed me, to provide myself of such accommodation as might be most suitable to my future studies. I went, therefore and took myself a lodging as near to his house as conveniently I could; and from thence forwards went every day in the afternoon (except on the first day of the week) and sitting by him in his dining-room, read to him such books in the Latin tongue as he pleased to hear me read. . . . After some common discourses had passed between us, he called for a manuscript of his, which being brought, he delivered to me, bidding me take it home with me and read it at my leisure, and when I had so done, return it to him with my judgement thereupon. When I came home, and had set myself

to read it, I found it was that excellent poem which he entitled *Paradise Lost*. After I had with the utmost attention read it through, I made him another visit and returned him his book, with due acknowledgment for the favor he had done me in communicating it to me. He asked me how I liked it, and what I thought of it, which I modestly but freely told him ; and after some further discourse about it, I pleasantly said to him ; ‘Thou hast said much here of *Paradise Lost*, but what hast thou to say of *Paradise Found* ? He made me no answer, but sat sometime in a muse ; then brake off that discourse and fell upon another subject ;” This suggestion of Elwood’s induced Milton to write a sort of sequel to *Paradise Lost*, entitled *Paradise Regained*. Later still he wrote *Samson Agonistes*, and the two were published together in 1671.

We know from records just how Milton spent his time during his last days. Early in the morning a chapter of the Bible was read to him, in Hebrew, after which he remained an hour in meditation. He then studied, with the help of his daughters or friends, until mid-day. After an hour’s exercise he played upon the organ or bass-viol, studied again until six, and in the evening friends came to him informally. His daughter Deborah said that his conversation was

charming, and in spite of many stories of his harshness and severity, of his children's gloomy withdrawal from him, we think he must have possessed many qualities which strongly endeared him to his friends ; for, in that careless age, many sought the blind poet's society. His visitors found him seated in his arm-chair, in a pleasant room hung in old green drapery ; his organ and bass-viol were near him ; his papers, books and writing materials were close at hand ; he dressed always in black, and, it is said, retained much of the beauty which had made him celebrated in his college days at Cambridge, fifty years before. He was pale and delicate in feature still, his eyes bright and handsome, showing no sign of their blindness. His mind was perfectly clear to the very last, and we may think of him as calm and serene, when, without any pain or suffering, on Sunday the 8th of November, 1674, his life ended.

Milton's third marriage had not made his home happy for his daughters. Deborah, who was her father's favorite, was finally obliged to leave home ; she went with a friend to Ireland and was afterwards married to a Mr. Clarke, and had a family of ten children. Mary Milton never married ; and Anne, who had a beautiful face, but was slightly deformed, married and died soon afterwards. There are none of the poet's

descendants now known to be living. Many years ago, in the neighborhood of those very Bow-Bells that ring near Bread street, there lived an old lady who claimed to be Mrs. Clarke's great-grand-daughter. A small circle often gathered about her quiet fireside and talked, I don't doubt, of the days when the scrivener's sign swung over Milton's doorway near by, and the beautiful boy used to walk past on his way to school. But this obscure descendant has also passed away, and, as I told you, there is little left unchanged in Milton's neighborhood but the merry clanging sounds from the quaint old steeple of St. Mary-le-Bow.

Milton's famous works are the following, arranged according to their merits: *Paradise Lost*, *Samson Agonistes*, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Paradise Regained*.

Milton is called the "last of the Elizabethans," because he was the friend and associate of many illustrious men belonging to Elizabeth's period. His style, however, differs greatly from that of all the minor poets belonging to the same era. His verse is majestic and flowing, free from those exaggerations and fine-sounding phrases which *Euphuës* made the fashion; as full of imagination as that of Spenser, but still strongly influenced by Puritanism. *Paradise Lost* is in nine books, and was originally intended for

a Drama. Some outlines of this first idea are still to be seen at the University of Cambridge. The poem opens with a description of the Fallen Angels in Hell, who resolve with their master, Satan, to war against God, by tempting Adam to sin. Satan flies to earth, discovers Eden, which is described with Adam and Eve in their innocence.

“ So on he fares, and to the border comes  
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,  
As with a rural mound, the champaign head  
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides  
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,  
Access denied ; and overhead upgrew  
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,  
A sylvan scene, and as the ranks ascend,  
Shade above shade, a woody theatre of stateliest view.

The four books following this contains the story of the war in Heaven, told by the Archangel Gabriel ; a description of Satan's fall and the creating of the world. The last four books describe the Temptation and Fall of Man ; Adam's vision of the Future, with the Redemption of Man by Christ ; and finally the Expulsion from Paradise. *Paradise Lost* is always to be associated with the rise and failure of Puritanism in England, and many think Milton's idea in his great poem was to illustrate his own country and people as he knew them.

In *Paradise Lost* there was a tendency towards what is called a labored style, and when Milton wrote *Paradise Regained*, this defect was increased. The last named poem lacks the grace of *Paradise Lost*, and has never been considered in any way its equal.

*Samson Agonistes* has special reference to Milton's blind old age, and shows great power and pathos.

We must now glance briefly at some other writers who were famous in Milton's day. Had you asked any student in 1674, whose poems were most admired in England, he would undoubtedly have answered, "Cowley's and Waller's," for at that date Abraham Cowley and Edmund Wallers were regarded as the great geniuses of the age. Cowley was born in 1618, and died in 1667. He attached himself to the Royalist cause, but when the Stuarts were restored to the throne he was not sufficiently rewarded for his services, and his last years were clouded and unhappy. Cowley's verses had much of the exaggeration of the Elizabethan age, but his prose was more dignified and natural. A generation later, Alexander Pope wrote of him :

"Who now reads Cowley? If he pleases yet,  
His moral pleases, not his pointed wit :  
Forget his epic, nay, Pindaric art,  
But still I love the language of his heart."

Waller, like Cowley, wrote in an overstrained, fanciful style, and at present only a few of his verses are considered worth preserving. He belonged, at different times, to the Royalist and Commonwealth parties, and wrote a panegyric on "My Lord Protector," when Cromwell was in power, and an ode to King Charles, after the Restoration. Many of his verses are addressed to Lady Dorothy Sidney, whom he calls "Sacharissa," and among them are some pretty tender lines.

Robert Herrick was also known as one of the "Cavalier poets," but, while he wrote many exquisite verses, he degraded his genius by a coarseness and vulgarity which even his own age condemned.

One of the saddest lives and one of the kindest, was that of Sir John Suckling, a Cavalier poet, born in 1608, who after various efforts on behalf of the King, died in Paris, in 1642, in great want and loneliness. Suckling's well known "Ballad on a Wedding" is often quoted to-day, especially the following lines :

" Her feet beneath her petticoat,  
Like little micê, stole in and out,  
As if they feared the light."

Of all the Cavalier poets, the figure of Richard Lovelace is perhaps the most interesting, for we have descriptions of him in his early days at the court of King Charles I., "the most amiable and beautiful

youth that eye ever beheld"—“admired and adored,” Anthony Wood tells us, “and honest, virtuous and courtly in his deportment.” Poor Lovelace, while Milton was defending Puritanism, occupied himself defending Royalty, and suffered every manner of privation and disappointment. He was betrothed to Lucy Sackervell, the *Lucretia* of his verses ; but as he was reported killed in the battle at Dunkirk, the lady’s relations compelled her to marry, and poor Lovelace returned to England, to break his heart and die in obscurity and poverty. He had been in his youth noted for the splendor of his dress, which “suited the fairness of his beauty :” but in those last sad years he wore clothing “befitting the poorest of servants.” He died two years before the restoration of King Charles.

The extremes of Puritanism were naturally ridiculed by the Royalists, and a famous satire upon the Puritans was written by Samuel Butler and entitled *Hudibras*. It is still considered one of the best satires in the English language, though rather crowded with exaggerations, and containing much that is purely nonsensical. Poor Butler’s life was sad enough ; he was slighted by the people he had supported, and died in a mean London street, poor and lonely, in 1680, at the age of sixty-eight.

Another famous Royalist and poet was Sir William

Davenant, (1605 — 1668) to whose protection, at one time, Milton owed his life, as I have already told you.

Thomas Carew (1589 — 1639) was one of the gayest poets and courtiers of Charles I., and wrote some of the most graceful verses of that very verse-making day.

About the same time one of the first female poets in English literature became known — Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, who died in 1673, and of whom Dr. Johnson said, “she had a great deal of wit,” and Horace Walpole said, “a fertile pedant with a passion for scribbling.”

Among the specially known writers of the era ending with Milton's death, are John Bunyan, author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and Jeremy Taylor, a noted preacher and scholar, the author of *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, and many other works of a religious character.

Jeremy Taylor was one of the religious writers who adhered to the Church of England. He was born in 1613, the son of a barber at Cambridge; he was a staunch Royalist, and suffered imprisonment on this account in Cromwell's time, but on the restoration of Charles II. he was treated with every honor and distinction. He was noted in his own day chiefly for his eloquence as a preacher.

John Bunyan was the son of a poor tinker, and was born at Elton, in Bedfordshire, in the year 1625. He



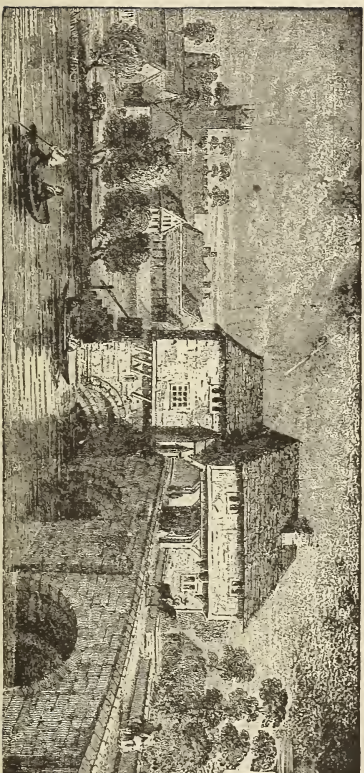
JOHN BUNYAN.

[ Drawn from life by T. Sadler, 1685—*Fac simile of the old print.* ]

has himself given an account of his life, and we can fancy him, a rude uneducated boy, playing about the village, reckless and profane, as he says, yet haunted

by the words of the preachers. When he was but ten years of age he began to be tormented by religious doubts and fears ; as he grew older these questions vexed and disgusted him more and more. He hated sin, he tells us, dreaded and feared eternal punishment, yet continued in a careless mode of life. Certain verses and striking passages of Scripture were always ringing in his ears ; the Puritan influences of the time affected him strongly, but he did not join any of the various sects until his thirtieth year. Many writers have spoken of his life before this time as if it had been a wicked one ; but that could hardly have been the case. Bunyan, in writing of himself, exaggerated his misdeeds, and yet there seems to have been no vice but that of profanity among them ; this he gave up suddenly, and with terrible remorse.

He married early in life, as he tells us, a good woman, who was the child of godly parents. When they were married, Bunyan says, they had not so much as a fork or a spoon between them, but the wife possessed two religious books, or tracts, and these Bunyan read eagerly. After serving as a soldier and leading a life full of religious doubts and torments, Bunyan was finally baptised and became a member of a Baptist congregation — this was in 1655,



The prison on Bedford Bridge in which John Bunyan was confined.



while Cromwell was still governing England, and one year after Milton's blindness fell upon him. Bunyan now became a preacher and went about the country assembling congregations, exhorting and preaching Calvinistic doctrines with wonderful fervor, until Charles II. came to the throne, when such preaching was declared unlawful, and Bunyan, persisting in it, was seized and cast into Bedford jail, where he remained more than twelve years. While there he supported his family by making lace, and occupied his leisure hours in writing. It was during this time he composed his famous allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Meanwhile James II. came to the throne and a proclamation of "liberty of conscience" finally released Bunyan from jail and permitted him to go about preaching as before. A meeting-house was built for him at Bedford, where he continued to preach, occasionally visiting London and preaching to the "Non-Conformists" as his people were called. In 1688 a terrible fever raged in London, and Bunyan was one of its first victims. He died in his sixty-first year.

Bunyan left many religious works, but he will always be known as the author of *THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*. His severe religious views naturally made him intolerant and prejudiced against those of others, and in his allegory he is frequently unjust to people

differing from himself in faith, but the work is wonderful from a literary point of view. The names of the characters in the book are familiar to everybody at the present day, and there is a reality about it all which we find in no other allegory that ever was written: "Christian," "Apollyon," "the House Beautiful," and "the Valley of the Shadow," are used as types by every writer in the civilized world.

#### EXTRACT FROM THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

Christian and the Pilgrims have reached the Celestial City, and Bunyan relates his dream of what they saw:

"The talk that they had with the Shining Ones was about the glory of the place. . . . You are going now, said they, to the Paradise of God wherein you shall see the tree of life, and eat of the never fading fruits thereof; and when you come there, you shall have white robes given you, and your walk and talk shall be every day with the King, even all the days of eternity.

There came out also, at this time, to meet them, several of the King's Trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, who with melodious noises and loud, made even the heavens to echo with their sound. . . . And now were these two men as 'twere in Heaven before they came at it; being swallowed up with the sight of Angels and with hearing of their melodious notes. Here also, they had the city itself in view, and they thought they heard all the bells therein ring to welcome them thereto. But above all, the warm and joyful thoughts they had about their own dwelling there with such company, and that forever and ever. Oh, by what tongue or pen can their glorious joy be expressed?"\*

\*Pilgrim's Progress. Part I.

## VIII.

### JOHN DRYDEN AND HIS TIMES.

A glance at the court of Charles II., the sports and pastimes — Revival of the theatre — John Dryden — Early Puritan impressions — Education at Westminster and Cambridge — Death of his father — Visit to his uncle, Sir John Driden — Rejection by his cousin Honor — Dryden at the court of Oliver Cromwell — His famous tribute to Cromwell's memory — His greeting to the restored King — A morning stroll with the King and his favorites — Coarseness of the Drama and Literature under Charles II. — Dryden writes a play — Visit to the Earl of Berks — Marriage with Lady Elizabeth Howard — Dryden attacked by ruffians — The King suggests a poem — Last days and shocking death-scene of Charles II. — Dryden becomes Poet-Laureate under James II., and loses the honor under William and Mary — The poet's home in Gerrard Street — Famous evenings at "Will's coffee-house" — Introduction of "lampooning" — Dryden and Jacob Tonson, the publisher — The *Ode to St. Cecilia*, and *Alexander's Feast* — Impurity of the Drama — Dryden's scruples and repentance — His last days.

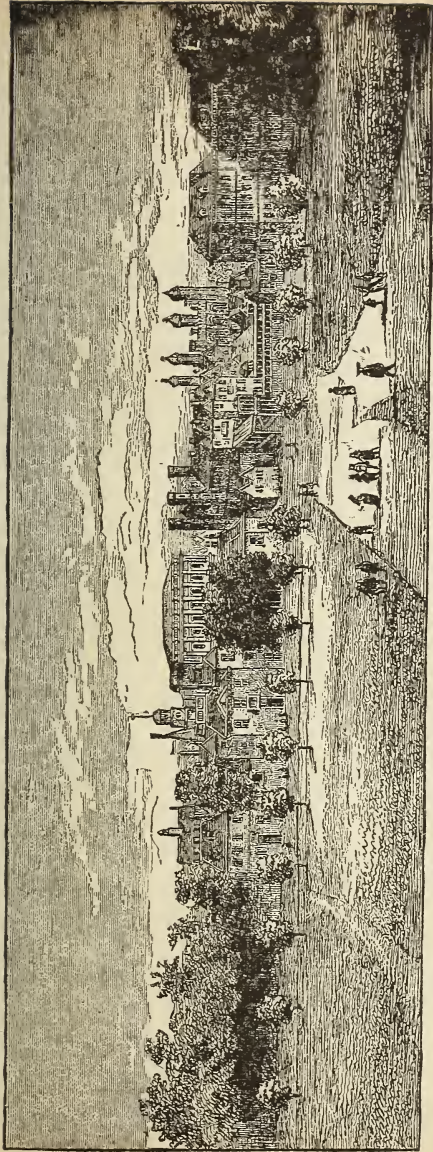
ON the restoration of Charles II., Puritanism seemed quite forgotten. In fact, the English people had begun to tire of the severities of Cromwell's day even before the Protector's death, and

among many, this extreme outward rigor had become the cloak for much that was irreligious and profane. The court of Charles set the fashion of recklessness profanity, and splendor. The prim garb of the Puritans was set aside and, in its place, the most luxurious silks and satins, laces and jewels, plumes, hoops, and high-heeled boots came into vogue. The gloomy austerities of Cromwell's day naturally produced an extreme under a new ruler.

Charles was called the "Merry Monarch," and, from all accounts given us of high life in his day, the title was not undeserved.

As the court set the fashion for the upper classes, the daily routine of the King and his gentlemen may be taken as a sample of the manner in which the wealthier people of the time passed their lives.

In the morning, it was fashionable to ride on horseback in the Park or to walk in the Mall, — a portion of St. James Park not far from the palace, where a game called "Mall" was played by all the court and nobles and gentlemen; hence the name. Later in the day the Mall was again crowded. Refreshments were served under the trees; people sat about in groups, or walked up and down in the shaded walks talking together. Fops, belles, men of learning, poets and dramatists, all frequented the Mall, and later, the same company might be found at the thea-



St. James Park. 1680.



tres ; for, of course, under Charles II. the theatres were re-opened.

The evenings were usually devoted to dancing and gambling — two pastimes in which Charles and his court excelled, — and the revels were prolonged until a late hour ; while wickedness, or at least carelessness, was seen on every side.

When Sunday came the fashionable people of the day openly yawned and fell asleep, or chatted and laughed during the service ; and the clergy were apt to make their discourses as gratifying as possible to the King and his comrades, and to overlook the vices and follies of the day. It is not a pleasing picture. Evelyn and Pepys, the two diarists of whom you have heard already, have given various accounts of these days, and it hardly seems to have been an encouraging time for literature.

In all the court the poor foreign Queen, alone, is an exception to the general frivolity. Simple, honest, unobtrusive in her mode of life, with a calm piety, she seems to have thought it useless to interfere with the life around her. Perhaps a woman of stronger will would have done more ; but Catherine of Braganza came a stranger into England on her marriage, not speaking the language, and certainly not understanding the people.

After a slight effort at remedying the evils she

found at court, she seems to have slipped into a corner to live her own dull harmless life. Only when the King was dying we learn how passionate her grief was, so uncontrollable, indeed, that the physicians feared it would kill her ; and from this, we see that all those silent years poor Catherine, neglected, barely noticed by Charles, must have been miserable by very reason of her true devotion to the King.

It is in Charles' court that we first see John Dryden as a well-known poet. You remember that he was one of those who visited Milton in his blind old age. Passing over all the minor Cavalier poets, the authors of satires and prose works — Burton, Walton, and many others, — we come to Dryden as one of the leading figures in our story of literature.

Dryden was the son of a country gentleman and was born in the year 1631, probably on the 9th of August. His father was a Puritan — a Presbyterian it is said — and, of course, Dryden was educated as such while at home. He was sent at an early age to Westminster School, where at this day a wooden form is preserved in which Dryden's name is cut.

The head master was a famous man named Busby. He liked young Dryden who was always scribbling verses or bits of translations, — a slim boy, we are told, with a plain grave face and an unusually quiet



A London Dandy of 1646.



manner. Old Dr. Busby was an eccentric character, immensely fond of disciplining the boys and flogging them when they needed it. He had a great idea of keeping up his dignity before the boys, and would stride into the school-room with a solemn air which struck terror into some of the small boys' consciences.

One day King Charles visited the schools. Dr. Busby received him very civilly but kept his hat on all the time. One of the foppish gentlemen-in-waiting whispered to the doctor to take it off.

"Sir," whispered Busby back again, "I am doing it on purpose. I could never allow my boys to think there was any one greater than I am!"

This was Dryden's school teacher and from him he, no doubt, learned the art of concentration in work which distinguished him later.

From Westminster School he went to Cambridge University where he studied well, made some translations, but was nearly disgraced for some satirical verses. He graduated in 1653, and a year later his father died leaving him heir to a small country property and about sixty pounds a year. Young Dryden went down to Northamptonshire to arrange his business affairs.

Having been much away from home he knew his country relations but slightly, and, on being

introduced to the family of his uncle, Sir John Dryden, was captivated by his pretty cousin Honor.

The country ladies of that day had more real charm than the city belles. Puritanism had had the effect of refining their manners somewhat; and if home life was too formal and severe, too cold in its religious character, it was, at least, better than the reckless frivolity of the town.

Dryden was fascinated by his uncle's daughter, a rather coquettish maiden, who seemed to have been more amused and flattered than grateful for her cousin's preference. Her refusal to marry him was the first disappointment in the poet's life, and it seems to have tinged all his later years with a certain melancholy. When Dryden became famous, we are told the pretty proud Miss Honor bitterly repented her scorn of him. She never listened to another suitor, but died an old maid at her country home in Northamptonshire.

After this Dryden went to London, where he lived much with his uncle, Sir Gilbert Pickering, who was Chamberlain to the Protector. Quite naturally the young man shared the political views of the household. He seems to have thought little about such matters, however, until the sudden death of Cromwell inspired him, and he burst forth with some verses

on "My Lord Protector" which are still famous.

Some months passed. You know how Richard Cromwell, the Protector's son, was set aside and how the "Merry Monarch" came to his own again. Dryden, it appears, went over to the new King's cause and welcomed him with a poetical greeting, not at all equalling, however, his tribute to the dead Cromwell. Charles received him at once into favor, and on fine mornings when the King was seen pacing to and fro under the trees of the Mall, "Mr. Driden" (as his name was sometimes written) was often his companion, the King conversing affably with him, or with Pepys or Evelyn, those amusing gossips, or perhaps Locke, who was at this time coming into notice as a philosopher.

You can fancy the scene on such an occasion. The King, as Pepys tells us, "mighty fine" in white or blue satin and silver lace ; his face thin and dark ; his hair black and worn in long curling locks falling upon his shoulders. By his side see Dryden, a rather plump, bright-complexioned man, but with "a down look," as one of his friends said, "and not very conversible." \*

And there comes stout little Pepys, the amiable gossip, trotting along with his pretty wife in a yellow

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\* Pope to Spence. See *Spence's Anecdotes*.

satin petticoat, a crimson sacque, and her hair in a cluster of short and long ringlets. Evelyn, more sedate than Pepys, I am sure, stands somewhat apart, a little horrified by the boisterous merriment of a group of court ladies in masks who, now and then, attract the King's attention by some saucy witty speech. Portraits of the beautiful frivolous women of Charles' court were being painted by Sir Peter Lily, the court artist, whom we may see approaching to ask His Majesty some question about the background or coloring of a picture Charles had commanded.

I was looking yesterday at some of Sir Peter's pictures still hanging in the palace at Hampton Court ; a row of pretty, simpering, idle women who cared nothing for the higher duties of life, who frittered away their time at St. James and died one by one, unhappy, neglected old women, with no human being to care whither the souls they themselves had forgotten were journeying.

Pleasure and distraction, as you see, ruled the day, and so the theatres which Charles reopened were largely patronized ; but who could expect that for such a court the plays would be moral and free from vulgarity ? Indeed, no one now reads or remembers the drama of that time.

We have to regret that Dryden, whose genius was worth better employment, stooped to write for the

players and theatres of the day. It seemed then, however, to be the one road to success open to him ; later in life he bitterly regretted having so wasted and degraded the talent God had given him. His first play was a failure ; but about the same time he went to visit Sir Robert Howard, the son of the Earl of Berkshire, and the two young men set about writing a play together.

The Earl of Berkshire's house at Charlton was a very comfortable agreeable place. Dryden was never fond of the court frivolities and he liked the quiet hours at his friend's country house, where he divided his time between work and society of a calmer, more congenial description than he found at St. James.

One of the family was Lady Elizabeth Howard, the Earl's daughter, a handsome young woman, witty and merry though not intellectual. How it came about we do not know, but the poet offered her his hand and, the young lady accepting it, they were soon married. Both repented the marriage afterwards, for Dryden was devoted to literature and his wife did not understand him. She wanted his undivided attention ; and we are told that once, in a passion, after heaping reproaches upon him, she exclaimed :

"I wish, sir, I was a book ; then you might care for me !"

"If you were an almanac, my dear," rejoined the

husband, "and I could change you once a year!"

The play written by Dryden and Howard was produced at the theatre with gorgeous scenery and proved successful. Other plays followed, and of course Dryden had both rivals and enemies. Among these the Duke of Buckingham was the leading spirit; and later a wretched poet, or rather rhymester, named Elkanah Settle, was set up as his rival, but, except in one instance, the work of these rivals is forgotten. Buckingham wrote a very clever satire on Dryden's plays, called "The Rehearsal," in which all the poet's weaknesses were sharply ridiculed, and the style was sharply burlesqued. \*

In the year 1666 a terrible fire broke out in London, spoken of to this day as "The Great Fire of London." Evelyn has left a description of it, telling how one splendid building after another vanished in the flames, and it seemed as if the whole city and its inhabitants must be destroyed, and swarms of homeless women and children thronged the streets for days afterwards, while the noblest portion of the city lay in ruins.

Dryden, who was then at Charlton, wrote a very fine poem to commemorate this year, known as the "Annus Mirabilis," or "Wonderful Year." His ene-

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\* This is said to have suggested to Sheridan one of his famous plays, *The Critic*.

mies were still jealous and longing to do him some injury ; and the Earl of Rochester, an infamous man who does not merit the name of poet, hired certain ruffians to attack Dryden as he was walking home one night through Rose Alley. They beat him severely, and so sudden was their descent upon him that Dryden had no opportunity for self-defence. How unjust the libels put upon him were, you can fancy from the fact that, for years, he was ridiculed for not resisting this mean and cowardly beating, while the dishonorable Rochester's part seems to have been forgotten.

In 1681 Dryden silenced his enemies by a satire called *Absalom and Achitophel*. This poem was directed at political as well as literary characters, the Earl of Shaftesbury being pointed at with open meaning.

The King, as usual, was pleased with Dryden's work and desired him to do more in the same direction. One day they were walking together in the Mall when Charles said suddenly :

“ Now, Dryden, if *I* were a poet — ”

“ Well, your Majesty,” said Dryden laughing, “ what then ? ”

“ I would write a poem called *The Medal*,” said Charles ; and forthwith explained his ideal of a politi-

cal poem, which Dryden took up at once and wrote his well known poem named, as the King suggested, *The Medal*.

A religious poem appeared soon after, for which the poet was ridiculed by some and applauded by others.

At this period authors were obliged to make their work personal, in a way, if they wished to be well received. It was an age very different from our own, for literature was not accepted solely for itself. Satire, political suggestions, public praises, all these were part of an author's work unless he dealt solely in science and philosophy, as Locke was doing in Dryden's day ; as Bacon had done while Ben Jonson was writing plays and a crowd of insignificant poets sang the praises of this one or that in the court of Elizabeth and James.

In 1685 the King showed signs of failing health, but the riotous court life went on as before. The theatres were crowded ; the gay companies of ladies and gentlemen danced, gambled, quarrelled, and died in the same careless fashion as if all immortality was nothing. In the midst of it all, while playing at cards one night, the King was stricken with Death. The courtiers were suddenly checked in their dissipation. Death, coming to that "Merry Monarch" with such a

swift remorseless tread, awed those who stood about and hushed their bold speeches and boisterous laughter.

The poor King, I think, saw what a farce his life had been. He apologized ironically to those about him for being so long in dying. The Queen, who had loved him, was wild with grief and he humbly asked her pardon for having ill-treated her so long. She, poor lady, fell upon her knees and besought him to forgive her any wrong she might have done him.

You can fancy this pitiful royal death-bed. Mirth and frivolity suddenly stopped short. Did those silly women of the court, those fine plumed and ruffled gentlemen pause, I wonder, long enough to question their own consciences? We can see them standing about the sumptuous bed of their sovereign, or chatting together in the ante-rooms, discussing his follies and his good-heartedness. One of them sent a Catholic priest to the King who accepted the Roman Catholic faith before dying, and his funeral took place at night according to the law which forbade its being public or in daylight.

Dryden had been going in and out of all these scenes, and the new sovereign, James II., knew him well. He was created Poet Laureate, a post for which he was extremely well-fitted; but you know from

history all the tumult of this time — how King James abdicated and died in exile; how William and Mary reigned at Whitehall and St. James. The court, if somewhat improved in decorum, was a dull one even for the poets, and Dryden lost his honors by reason of his Catholicism.

This was, however, the best period of his writing and the most industrious part of his life. His income was small, and losing the royal bounty which he had enjoyed as Poet Laureate under James was particularly unfortunate now, for his son Charles had returned from Italy an invalid and looked to him for support.

At this time Dryden lived in Gerrard Street, near Soho Square, in a plain brick house which is still standing and known as Number Forty-Three. He used to write in the front-room on the ground floor. We are told just how he spent his time. Rising early he wrote in the morning hours, then dined *en famille*, and afterwards repaired to "Will's Coffee-House," from which he returned early in the evening.

"Will's" was in those days a famous place. When young men graduated at Oxford or Cambridge and came up to London with rhymes and "satires" in their pockets, ready for publication and perhaps derision, their first ambition was to be received at

"Will's," the coffee or chocolate house most noted as a rendezvous for the wits, scholars, and poets of the day.

It was situated in Covent Garden, at the end of Bow Street. A haberdasher had a shop on the ground floor ; the coffee and card rooms were above, and the clever gentlemen who thronged them passed in by a very modest side entrance.\* The meeting-room of the coterie was a plain, substantial sort of place, with sanded floor, easy-chairs and tables ; wide windows, opening in summer upon a balcony, in winter closed and draped with warm soft hangings, while a huge fire burned cheerily ; and the guests were permitted to cook for themselves a chop or bit of bacon if they liked. Near the fire-place was a comfortable seat known always and respected as "Dryden's winter chair." Without, upon the balcony, a chair was kept for the poet's summer use. No one ever touched them ; but when Dryden occupied either, a group of men, young and old, gathered about.

He was recognized as the leader of the coterie at "Will's." The younger men, when they came first into that sacred haunt, sought him eagerly ; yet he could hardly be called a popular man. He had rivals and enemies, and, indeed, I hardly think he was

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\* The building is now a "ham and beef shop."

a man of very sympathetic, genial nature ; but all the world respected him.

Conversation at "Will's" must have been, I think, very entertaining. English literature was young enough to make a new style, or a new idea, the subject for general discussion. Dryden talked ; the rest listened, then discussed and debated.

Can you not picture these elegantly dressed gentlemen lounging about the shabby comfortable room, discussing Locke's new books on Philosophy and Science, Boileau, a popular French writer of the day, the latest French dramas of Racine, a new edition of *Paradise Lost* or of Dryden's *Virgil*, or, perhaps, the poems of a promising young writer named Addison ; while by the fire, or on the balcony, sits the old poet, the plump, finely-colored, serious gentleman whose opinions are of the utmost weight and consequence.

Newspapers, small sheets and rather quaint in style, were then fairly established, and copies were handed about at "Will's" with some ceremony as affording topics for discussion and argument. Now and then, one of the gentlemen in attendance on Queen Mary's dull court at Hampton Court Palace would appear in the midst, and forthwith stories of the royal household, of the beautiful arrogant Duchess of Marlborough, or of the stupid, well-meaning Princess Anne, were circulated.

All classes were combined at "Will's." Literature and Politics went hand in hand, while Fashion looked on, a little in the distance, perhaps, but still with a certain measure of approval.

It was at "Will's" in those days that "lampooning," as a certain kind of anonymous attack was called, began to be practised. All public events, and many very private personal affairs, were made the subject of verses, satirical and sometimes insolent in the extreme. No one knew who wrote them, though no doubt the authors were often enough suspected and discovered. Copies were circulated at "Will's" and other public places, to the great mortification and annoyance of the people held up to ridicule. They were very poor specimens of versifying; only a few are preserved, and these in themselves are not worth recording except as an illustration of the manners of the day. While true poetry on the one hand had become more dignified, elegant and stately, mere verse-making was a popular means of revenge in the hands of politicians as well as men of literary renown; and, as the utmost freedom was used, you can well imagine how much trouble and vexation these lampoons occasioned.

The most noted publisher of that day was one Jacob Tonson, whose shop in the Strand, with its sign of "Shakespeare's head," once stood where a corner

of Somerset House now stands. Tonson was a remarkable man, and his plump, burly figure is well-known in pictures of that time. If Dryden and he sometimes quarrelled we must, on the whole, admit that the poet was treated very fairly. Dryden translated Virgil and Ovid and made well by it. But an amusing incident is related in connection with this from which you can see how much poets and publishers depended upon patronage. When Tonson took the MS. of Virgil he told Dryden he must dedicate it to King William.

"Not a bit of it," retorted Dryden, who hated the monarch for his scorn of all Catholics in the kingdom.

Tonson fretted and fumed in his shop while Dryden stood by resolute and not to be bought over.

"It can't be done, Tonson," he said finally, bringing his hand down upon the pile of proof-sheets. Then he turned away and walked out of the shop with a contemptuous air.

Tonson looked at the proof sheets and at a sketch made to face the title page. It was a picture of Virgil with the usual laurel wreath. An idea suddenly seized Tonson and away he rushed to the engraver, who, after some suggestions, made Virgil into an abominable likeness of the Dutch King William. In those days even an absurdity of this kind was well re-

ceived. The King was complimented, Tonson satisfied, and it was useless for Dryden to howl with rage.

Soon afterwards, the Stationers' Company applied to him to write an ode to St. Cecilia for their annual musical festival, held on the twenty-second of November, the Feast of St. Cecilia. Dryden wrote the ode, and later, in 1697, prepared a second for the same company. This last is the great poem by which Dryden will always be most widely known and honored. It is called *Alexander's Feast*.

The first ode was written under a wonderful inspiration. Lord Bolingbroke, a leading nobleman of the day, called one morning at the house in Gerrard Street to see Dryden. The poet received him but was weak, trembling and nervous. Lord Bolingbroke inquired at once if he was ill.

"My musical friends," replied Dryden, "made me promise to write them an ode for their Feast of St. Cecilia. I have been so struck with the subject that I could not leave it until it was written — here it is, *finished at one sitting!*"

In this ode, which I cannot give entire, occur the following familiar lines :

"From harmony, from heavenly harmony,  
This universal frame began;  
From harmony to harmony,

Through all the compass of the notes it ran,  
The diapason closing full in man."

The second ode to St. Cecilia, commonly called *Alexander's Feast* concludes with the following familiar lines on the saint :

"Let old Timotheus yield the prize,  
Or both divide the crown ;  
He raised a mortal to the skies,  
She drew an angel down."

In the year 1698, a clergyman named Jeremy Collier wrote a pamphlet fiercely denouncing the "Dramatists of the Restoration," as Wycherley, Congreve, Otway, Dryden and many others were called. His aim was to show how corrupt and degraded the stage and drama had become. He was certainly in the right, but he used such strong language that many thought him extravagant in what he said, and like most reformers he went too far, finding fault with trifles which he might easily have overlooked.

Congreve tried to answer the attack, but failed foolishly. Dryden humbly owned that he had done wrong in his youth by putting into print and upon the stage such vulgar and even wicked dramas. He pleaded guilty, he said, to all the accusations of vulgarity and coarseness in his early writings with which Collier taxed him, and he retracted them.

This attack of Collier's made a great sensation, both at the time and years later, and, with all its extravagance, did much good.

Dryden had translated several books for Tonson, and was now induced to undertake the rendering of some of Chaucer's stories into English verse which could be understood by the readers of the day; the English of Dryden's time being, except in a few expressions, like our own. He worked hard at these verses, laboring also for his son Charles; and when a certain playwright asked him to write the prologue and epilogue to a play, promising that the profits on the third night should be given to Charles Dryden, he did not refuse.

But his hand was tired. Disease had long wearied the poet and hard work had increased his suffering. Twenty days after the prologue and epilogue were written, when the coterie at "Will's" met one soft Spring evening (May 1st, 1700.), Tonson came rushing into the coffee-room, where the master's chair was vacant, with the news that John Dryden had breathed his last.

## CONTEMPORARIES OF DRYDEN.

JOHN DRYDEN. 1631 — 1700. Poet and Dramatist. Wrote "Heroic Stanzas on the Late Lord Protector" (in honor of Cromwell); "Astrea Redux" and "A Panegyric" (in honor of Charles II.); "Annus Mirabilis" (on the great fire of London); "Absalom and Achitophel" (in reply to his critics); "Religio Laici" (in defense of the Church of England); "The Hind and Panther" (in defense of the Church of Rome); "Ode to St. Cecilia" and "Alexander's Feast." Besides these and other poems he wrote some remarkable Fables (after Boccaccio and Chaucer, etc.); also nine plays, including "The Indian Emperor," "The Rival Ladies," "The Wild Gallant," etc.; some in rhyme, others in blank verse, and all coarse and improper. In prose he wrote "Essay on Dramatic Poets," and certain critical essays, etc.

JOHN LOCKE. 1632 — 1704. Philosopher. Wrote "Essay on the Human Understanding;" "Letters on Toleration;" "Treatises on Government;" "On Interest and the Value of Money;" "On Miracles;" "On Education," etc.

THOMAS OTWAY. 1651 — 1685. Dramatist. Wrote "The Orphan;" "Venice Preserved," etc.

THOMAS SHADWELL. 1640 — 1692. Poet and Dramatist. Crowned Poet Laureate in 1638. Among his plays are "Timon of Athens;" "The Humorists;" "The Virtuoso"; "The Lancashire Witches;" "The Squire of Alsatia," etc.

WILLIAM WYCHERLY. 1640 — 1715. Founder of the immoral dramas of the Restoration. Wrote "Love in a Wood;" "The Gentleman Dancing-Master;" "The Country Wife," etc.

WILLIAM CONGREVE. 1666 — 1729. Dramatist. Wrote "The Way Of the World;" "The Mourning Bride," etc.

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH. 1666 — 1726. Dramatist; also a famous architect. Wrote "The Relapse;" "The Provoked Wife," etc.

JOHN EVELYN, F. R. S. 1620 — 1705. Philosopher, naturalist and courtier. Known chiefly for his famous "Diary and Correspondence." Wrote also "Sylva, or a Discourse of Forest Trees," a work of great value to the English nation; and "Terra, a Discourse of the Earth," etc.

SAMUEL PEPYS. 1632 — 1703. Courtier and Government official. Famous for his "Diary" (written in cipher and hidden from view for more than a century; it was finally discovered in the library of Magdalen College, Oxford, and translated for publication in 1825). Pepys also wrote "Memoirs on the State of the Royal Navy;" and "Portugal History" in 1667 — 1668.

WILLIAM PENN. 1644 — 1718. Founder of Pennsylvania, preacher and philanthropist. Wrote "Truth exalted;" "No cross, no crown;" "Truth recovered from Imposture;" "Quakerism, a new name for old Christianity," etc.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE. 1628 — 1699. Diplomatist. Wrote "Memoirs," and "Miscellanies."

HON. ROBERT BOYLE. 1627 — 1691. Philosopher and chief founder of the Royal Society. Wrote many scientific essays; also "Seraphic Love;" "A Discourse of Things above Reason;" "Discourse against Swearing," etc.

GEORGE FOX. 1624 — 1690. Founder of the Society of Friends. Wrote "Journal of his Life and Travels," etc.

ROBERT BARCLAY. 1648 — 1690. Quaker theologian. Wrote "Apology for True Christian Divinity," etc.

ALGERNON SIDNEY. 1621 — 1683. Scholar and courtier. Was executed for treason though innocent, as was afterwards proved. Wrote "Discourses on Government;" "Essay on Love," etc.

JOHN RAY (WRAY). 1627 — 1704. Naturalist. Wrote "Universal History of Plants;" "Synopsis of Quadrupeds and Serpents," etc.

JOHN WALLIS, D. D. 1616 — 1703. Astronomer, mathematician and grammarian. Professor at Oxford. Wrote many scientific works in Latin, and the first English Grammar ever published, this also in Latin.

ELIAS ASHMOLE. 1617 — 1693. Antiquarian and founder of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University. Wrote "History of the Order of the Garter."

JOHN AUBREY. 1627 — 1697. Antiquarian.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM DAMPIER. 1652 — Famous navigator. Wrote "Voyage round the World," etc.

ANTHONY WOOD. 1632 — 1695. Historian of Oxford University.

WENTWORTH DILLON, Earl of Roscommon. 1633 — 1684. Irish writer. Benefitted the literature of the day by his pure and moral writings. Pope said of him: "Roscommon, not more learned than good." Wrote "Essay on Translated Verse;" and several odes, prologues, etc.

CHARLES SACKVILLE, Earl of Dorset. 1637 — 1706. Poet and satirist. His most celebrated song was: "To all you ladies now on land."

#### THEOLOGICAL WRITERS:

Bishop Burnet. 1643 — 1709. Bishop Ken. 1637 — 1710. John Tillotson, George Hicks, Robert South, Edward Stillingfleet, William Beveridge, etc.

#### MINOR WRITERS OF THE PERIOD.

John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham; John Wilmot, Earl of

Rochester; William Cavendish, Duke of Devon; Sir George Etheridge, Sir William Killigrew, Henry Vaughn, Joseph Beaumont, John Phillips, Thomas Brown, John Pomfret, Nathaniel Lee, Sir Charles Sedley, Richard Fleckure, John Banks, Mrs. Aphra Behn, Sir Roger L'Estrange, Edward Chamberlayne, L. L. D., Sir Samuel Morland, Sir George Mackenzie, Sir Robert Atkyns, John Eachard, Andrew Fletcher, Thomas Burnet, James Drake, Roger Palmer, Sir Thomas Pope Blount, Charles Blount, etc.

## IX.

ADDISON AND STEELE. [1672-1791.] [1671-1792.]

The Court of Queen Anne and "Queen Sarah" — A walk in Addison's London — Addison and Steele at the Charterhouse school — Dick Steele's mischief and scrapes — A holiday at Lichfield — Addison at Oxford University — His travels on the Continent — Steele's career in the army — The friends meet in London — Politics and literature — Godolphin gives Addison a commission — Addison in Ireland — Steele's plan for a newspaper — Success of *The Tatler* — Plan of *The Spectator* — Addison and his friends at the "Grecian" coffee-house — Steele's recklessness — Lady Steele at Hampton Court — The lion's head at "Button's" coffee house — Levees at Kensington Palace — The dangers of traveling by coach — Addison in full dress — His courtship of Lady Warwick — First night of *Cato* at Drury Lane — Addison as State Secretary — Marriage with the Countess and life at Holland House — Coolness between Addison and Steele — Addison's last hours — Steele's reformation and peaceful end.

FROM Dryden, let us turn to the host of writers who gave to the reign of Queen Anne the name of the "Augustan Era" in English literature. It was not quite deserved, later critics have thought,

but poets, essayists and dramatists seemed to spring up on every side, about this time ; the Queen, though dull and uninteresting herself, liked the society of clever people, and her court was noted for the brilliant men and women who thronged it.

The beautiful Duchess of Marlborough ruled Queen Anne, as you know ; for many years she gathered about the court a circle of clever men and women, and St. James, Hampton-Court and Kensington Palace are full of associations of the time when "Queen Sarah" as the Duchess was called, was at the height of her fame and beauty, and her husband, the hero of Blenheim, was one of the leaders in the Whig party.

Literature had now become popular and fashionable. A hundred well-known names belong to the period, but in this chapter we shall touch only upon the greatest ; and to know these you must fancy yourself in the London of their day, driving in the heavy coaches, going about in the pretty, curious sedan-chairs ; drinking chocolate, or tea, or wine in the famous coffee-houses ; sauntering into the drawing-rooms of the great ; making your way down the Strand to Tonson's book-shop ; listening to Jacobite songs ; reading some lampoon or satire thrown down upon your plate at "Will's," or "Button's ;" pausing

to watch the solemn funeral procession of some dead genius on its way to the old Abbey, or the gorgeous cavalcade of Lord Mayor or prince passing through the city. The company we are now going into was a goodly one, I think. We have to-day only their pictures and their books, their letters and their odd bits of gossip about each other, but all these can take us back almost face to face with their times.

There is a famous old school in London known as the Charterhouse. Since 1685 it has been altered, remodeled, in part rebuilt, and yet about the walls, in the cloisters, in the courtyards, and up and down the long, quaint corridors, the shallow oaken staircases, the dull old wainscotting, there seems to me to rest the memory of two boys, who, in 1685, played and studied, read and romped together, as pupils of the Charterhouse. The names of these two friends were JOSEPH ADDISON and RICHARD STEELE ; and later in life they were known as the authors of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*. Addison's father was a clergyman at Lichfield, and Steele was the son of an attorney in Dublin, who had died when the boy was only five. "Dick," as Steele was always called, had come to the Charterhouse when he was twelve ; and Addison was the same age, a scholarly, well-bred boy, who took all sorts of prizes and won commendation from boys and teachers.

Poor Dick, on the contrary, was full of mischief, and never was well out of one scrape before he was in another. Had all the stories of his exploits as a boy been printed they would fill a volume. On one occasion we hear that Dick Steele amused himself, of a moon-light night, by frightening the neighborhood with a mock ghost. Again he was caught pouring water down a neighboring chimney.

Addison went his way calmly and properly, but when the holiday season came, it was Dick Steele, of all the boys, whom he asked home to the Deanery at Lichfield. The two loved each other—Dick with all the generous enthusiasm of his Irish nature, blind to faults, if Addison had any, proud of his friend's cleverness and unselfish in his friendship; Addison with that well balanced affection which never closed his eyes to poor Dick's failings. \*

I think it is easy to picture the two boys in the great country house at Lichfield: Addison quite the young gentleman of the family at fifteen, handsome and dignified, with a great deal of sly humor, a twinkle in his quiet gray eyes, and a fondness for making little good-natured criticisms on his brothers and sisters; Steele, rather a stout boy for his years, black eyed, and dark haired, with a gay Irish laugh, boisterous mirth, recklessness in every act, but such amiable good nature, such overflowing kindness of heart, that

all the young people at Lichfield, as well as the Dean and the housemaids and men servants, worshiped him.

Addison and Steele were afterwards together at the university of Oxford, where Addison was distinguished for his scholarship and also for his Latin verses. The rooms he occupied in the college are still to be seen there, and for two centuries his favorite promenade under the elms by the shore of the Isis, has borne the name of "Addison's Walk."

After leaving Oxford he was offered an official position under the government and went abroad, with a pension of £300, to study French. Steele, meanwhile, entered the army of King William, where he rose to be a captain and made friends on every side.

Addison traveled for a time on the continent, investigating all that he saw and profiting by his studies; but unfortunately his patron at Court, who had procured him the pension, lost his own position, and of course Addison suffered likewise. He came back to London with a very scanty income, and took a lodging in a plain house, a room in the third story, called in those days a garret. By this time Steele had left the army and coming back to London, poor, in debt, reckless as ever, had taken to writing. He sought his old friend at once, and discussing literary work and plans, assured Addison that he wished for

nothing so much as that they might write something together.

Political feeling and party spirit was now so strong in England that all the writers of the day were affected by it. There were three parties. The "Tories" held by the court and church and government; the "Whigs" favored liberal views; the "Jacobites" defended the Pretender, as Queen Anne's brother was called. Through the streets Jacobite songs were sung; in the drawing-rooms of leading noblemen, Whig or Tory sentiments affected every company. Over the then new tea-cups at Kensington, Hampton-Court and St. James, ladies talked politics, and handed about the verses written by "Penny-a-liners" on some Whig or Tory hero, and many a gay beauty of the Queen's court was toasted in the coffee-houses as a leader of one or other of the factions.

This was the period of the war for the succession in Spain, when, at Blenheim, the great Duke of Marlborough had won the victory which made England proud and triumphant. So important an ally of politics was literature considered, that the Whigs felt it necessary to have Marlborough's praises sung in verse; a dozen miserable rhymesters had tried to do it, but only rendered the general and his victories ludicrous. Godolphin, the Secretary of State, was so

troubled that he asked Lord Halifax's opinion on the subject, and the result was that on the same day the nobleman might have been seen in a sedan-chair on his way to the humble lodging of Joseph Addison.



JOSEPH ADDISON.

The gentlemanly scholar received him with some surprise, but Godolphin's errand was soon explained: "Would Mr. Addison write an appropriate poem in honor of the great Marlborough and Blenheim?"

Addison's poem was a complete success. All the town read it; the Whigs were delighted, and even the

Tories had to own that it was fine. In fashionable drawing-rooms it was read with applause, in public offices the ministers of the Queen stopped to talk it over. The booksellers in the Strand could hardly supply the demand for it. Of course after this Addison was given a public office, that being the fashion of the day ; and later he went in an official capacity to Ireland. While there Steele wrote him of a novel plan he had formed for literary work.

I have told you about the newspapers of the time ; they were very poor from a literary point of view, and gave only the slightest store of news. There was little in them to attract any reader ; certainly nothing to interest the Queen's ladies, and the middle-class gentlewomen, the clever men of the day, or the country squires and parsons. Steele's idea was to bring out a weekly paper in which all manner of current events should be noticed and talked about by an imaginary person to be called "Mr. Isaac Bickerstaff." He had assumed this name in a recent controversy with another author and it seemed appropriate to keep it up. He wrote to Addison for assistance, and his friend at once promised it. The plan was developed, and on the 12th of April, 1709, appeared the first number of *The Tatler*. The paper was received with delight, and continued for two years to be extremely popular, but by this time Addison had returned to London, and at

his suggestion *The Tatler* was discontinued and another paper, on an improved plan, took its place. This was in 1711, and the new paper was named *The Spectator*.

Steele and Addison used to meet at a coffee-house known as "The Grecian," and there they made and developed their plan, which, when finally arranged, was somewhat as follows :

"The Spectator" was an imaginary character, supposed to be a gentleman of high culture and education who had devoted himself to all kinds of study and inquiry. After travelling abroad he took up his residence in London, where he observed the manners and customs of the time, the fine ladies and gentlemen, the belles of Queen Anne's court, the toasts of the clubs, the wits and clever men, the beaux and frivolous young gentlemen of society. He was an *habitué* of clubs ; he went among bankers and merchants in the morning ; in the evening he went to the theatre ; always observing, always commenting and criticising. But the "Spectator" was supposed to be a bashful man, who only talked among his few chosen friends ; of these, one *Sir Roger DeCoverley* was destined to be best known, and to this day, you will often hear the name of the dear old "Sir Roger" whom Addison and Steele created.

I suppose that we to-day can hardly know how great

was the enthusiasm with which *The Spectator* was received. It was published daily — a small paper, neatly printed, and attractive in form ; when London gentlemen came down to their breakfast they looked eagerly for it upon their plates ; every club and coffee-house kept copies upon its tables ; country gentlemen sent their servants early to meet the post-boys who galloped in from the nearest town with letters and *The Spectator* in their bags.

You see up to that time nothing so like an English story or tale had ever been given to the public. *The Spectator* tells a story from day to day, in which the current events are noted. *Sir Roger* is described as coming to town ; or *The Spectator* tells how he visited *Sir Roger* at his country-seat, *Coverley Hall*. There he describes the house, the honest butler, the old chaplain, and it is all so graphic we can almost see the faces and hear the voices, and feel the ring of honest laughter or touch of scorn in *Sir Roger's* tone now and then, his indignation at some folly of the day, his enjoyment of some good book or bit of acting. Not only was there this sort of novel interest in *The Spectator*, but the style was the purest and best prose that had ever appeared in the English language. Addison's various essays in *The Spectator*, besides those relating to *Sir Roger*, touched on different events of

the time, manners and customs, follies and vices. In all he wrote there was the same exquisite style of composition and originality of design, and better still in that age which had seen so much that was vicious and corrupt, the most upright and ennobling principle.

At the end of the year *The Spectator* was discontinued. It ended with the butler coming up to say that poor *Sir Roger* was dead. *Will Honeycomb*, a dissipated character sketched as one of the friends, reforms and marries ; and so the little story, if story it may be called, is brought to a close. Later, another paper, called *The Guardian*, was started, but *The Spectator* was the one upon which the fame of Addison and Steele will always rest. Addison at this time went to the "Grecian," much as Dryden did to "Will's." In those days a gentleman, especially if he were literary, spent four or five hours of every day at a coffee-house. Addison had been introduced to the "Kit-Kat" club, of which I shall tell you more in the next chapter, but at the "Grecian" he was the reigning sovereign.

Would you not like to have peeped in at the "Grecian" some evening when Addison was entertaining his friends with his sparkling talk that was never gossip, his wit that was never buffoonery, and his elo-

quence that was never bombast? We have so many pictures of that coffee-house club we can see it all: Addison, a tall, manly looking figure, with flowing wig, elegant laced clothes, silk stockings and embroidered hat, always the gentleman of the occasion; Steele, noisy, careless, good humored, laughing and joking in his Irish way; Dean Swift, the author of *Gulliver's Travels*, a coarse minded, eccentric genius; and sometimes a pale, fragile little figure, hump-backed, and plain in feature, but the greatest poet of the day—I mean Alexander Pope. Tickell and Budgell used also to frequent the “Grecian,” and so did Ambrose Phillips, to whose foolish writings the name “Namby pamby” was first given; and doubtless there were many wits of the day whose names have been long since forgotten.

There is a story told of Addison's unkindness to Steele which it seems to me is misunderstood: Steele was a spendthrift, and as he owed Addison money, his friend once seized his furniture to recover the debt; naturally enough Addison's critics have called this a piece of selfish cruelty, but when we look at Steele's life we may perhaps find some excuse for it. Steele, who had been the wild boy of the Charterhouse, the beloved young visitor at Lichfield Deanery, the bold, gay writer and editor, made friends easily as

he went on his laughing way in the world ; but he drank, he got into debt, he gave grand suppers when he could not afford bread and cheese, and then he used to have fits of remorse. Addison gave him money, time after time, as most of his friends did, but Dick was incorrigible. He was married to a pretty and intelligent woman of good family, and his letters to her show his character to perfection. I have been looking them over, and they make one laugh and sigh almost in the same moment. He bought a house for his bride at Hampton-court, only a stone's throw from the Queen's beautiful palace and famous gardens, but poor Lady Steele (Dick had been knighted) seems to have led a sad life there ; her husband's letters are a sort of a merry record of the scrapes he was always in, and are dated from Child's bank, or the Fleet prison or some place where he was perhaps hiding from the sheriff ; but he is usually tender and loving ; there was just the same affectionate warmth and generosity in his nature which had made all the Charterhouse boys and teachers love him in spite of his mischief and disorder. If you could see those letters you would seem to know poor Dick, but you would forget that he was the originator of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* ; in them he is only the extravagant, half-idle, reckless fellow, whose heart is

kindly while his actions seem almost cruel in their disregard of honor and lack of consideration for his



RICHARD STEELE.

wife's feelings. Meanwhile Steele took a house in London, in Berry street, now called Bury street near

which Swift, the Irish dean, then lived ; later we find him in a garden mansion in Bloomsbury Square, then a very fashionable locality, but here his troubles increased. It is said that at one of his dinner parties a guest commented on the singular appearance and awkwardness of the servants, upon which Steele whispered : " Hush, they are the bailiff and his men in disguise ! " \*

His wife, " poor Prue," as he calls her, often wrote from Hampton-court for a guinea, or a pound of tea or something of the sort, which the reckless though kind-hearted husband would send with many excuses and loving speeches, and then we may fancy him gayly making his way to " Buttons," the coffee-house which was in Addison's latter years the most popular resort of London men. At " Buttons " was a carved oak letter-box in the form of a lion's head, into whose jaws all contributions for the *Guardian* (the successor of the *Spectator*) were dropped.†



THE LION'S HEAD AT  
" BUTTON'S."

\*A similar story has been told of Sheridan.

†This lion's head is now preserved at Woburn Abbey.

At one time the poet Pope went there almost daily, and the old set, Budgell, Phillips, Carey and Davenant, were sure to be found near their great chief, Addison.

But it was not at coffee-houses only that these kindred spirits met ; at the levees at Kensington Palace men of genius were received, as I have already said, with great distinction. The old red brick palace, now so quiet and sleepy-looking in the midst of its beautiful gardens, was then the Queen's favorite residence ; green lanes, broad country roads and meadows stretched in every direction from it, and when Mr. Addison and his friends attended Queen Anne's court, they drove thither in a stately coach attended by armed outriders, for in those days there were no police, and footpads and highwaymen infested the roads from Westminster which are now densely populated streets of London. Within, the palace was rather a stiff, cold looking place, but a court "Drawing-room," as a royal reception is called, always made it a brilliant scene, for at that day costumes were extremely rich and varied. You can fancy Addison in a coat, waistcoat and knee-breeches of blue satin, silver laced and buckled, a white curled wig, and a three-cornered hat, lace ruffles, diamond shoe buckles, his sword clanking at his side as he made his way up the grand staircase and into the Throne-room

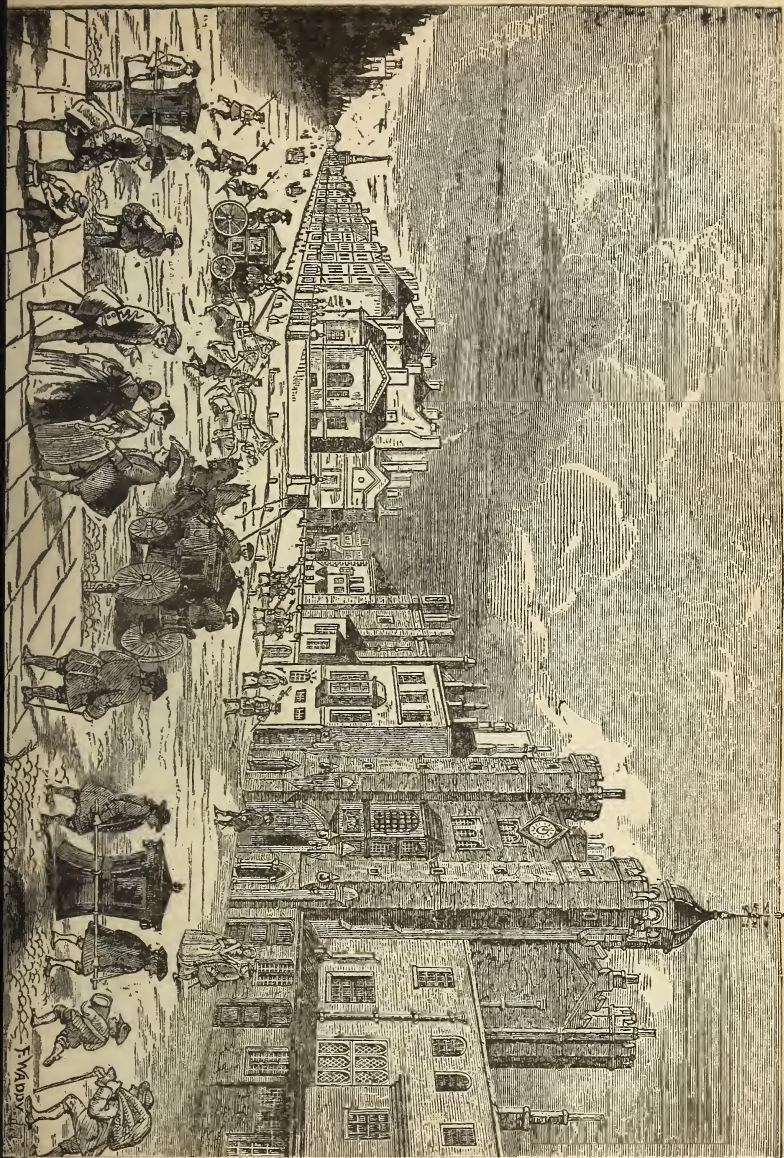
and Drawing-room, where Swift says Queen Anne used to sit in a circle of visitors, her fan to her mouth, saying about three words in a minute, and jumping up with evident relief when dinner was announced.

It may have been at Kensington Palace that Addison met the widow of the Earl of Warwick, a handsome witty woman whose home was at Holland House. He fell in love either with her, or with her high position ; but though Lady Warwick was amiable enough to the distinguished writer, she hardly thought that his fame matched with her title and fortune.

In 1713 the town was surprised and delighted by the promise of a play from the pen of Addison. Every eye watched eagerly for its appearance ; different political parties expected to find praise or blame, and when the opening night came the old Drury Lane theatre was crowded almost to suffocation.\* The play was *Cato*. Addison had caught the idea of such a play during his foreign travels, and had no doubt worked on it at different times. Colley Cibber, poet, actor and dramatist, was manager of the theatre, and as Addison promised all profits of the play to the actors, on the opening night, no pains were spared on their part to make it successful. Alexander Pope, the poet whose story I shall tell you in the next chap-

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\* Drury Lane Theatre was rebuilt in 1797, and again after the fire in 1809.





ter, wrote the prologue, the speech with which it was customary in those days to introduce a play ; and Dr. Garth, the amiable friend of Addison, wrote the epilogue, or closing speech ; an actor named Booth played the part of *Cato* ; the scenery, costumes, and all the appointments of the stage were splendid, and, as I have said, the house was crowded. Every line of the play was supposed to have a political meaning, and first on one side of the house, then on the other, cheers and applause burst forth, each faction wishing to outdo. The great Bolingbroke, who fancied the play was meant to satirize Marlborough, was in a box, and between the acts he sent for Booth and presented him with fifty guineas "for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual dictator." *Cato* was pronounced a success. It contains some of the noblest of Addison's thoughts, some of his best writing, and will retain its place in literature as long, perhaps, as *The Spectator* itself.

Queen Anne died at the old Kensington Palace in 1714, and a regency followed until the arrival of King George from Hanover.

In the interval Addison was made Secretary of State ; people used to say that he was unable to send his official dispatches punctually because he was so excessively particular about his rhetoric ; but this of

course was absurd, for no man ever wrote more fluently ; possibly he may not have known, at first, just the proper form to use in addressing the new King, for in state matters there are modes of expression quite unknown elsewhere.

In thinking of this period of Addison's life it is not as State Secretary that I like to picture him, but rather as the elegant man of letters and master at Holland House. His addresses to the Countess of Warwick were at last received favorably ; they were married, and Addison took up his abode in the grand old mansion which seems always full of associations of his memory in spite of all that is more recent.\* Unfortunately the Countess' temper as a wife proved less amiable than as a lady at Queen Anne's Court, smiling upon the distinguished author, whose attentions had a respectful flattery in them. She is represented as being imperious and disagreeable in her home. Her son, the young Earl, was a spendthrift and a disgrace to his name ; and in spite of the splendors surrounding him poor Addison must have found his life a tiresome one. At Holland House there is a spacious park with solemn avenues of grand old trees, under which it is said, Addison used to pace restlessly in the summer evenings. You may walk

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\*Holland House was afterwards the residence of the famous Lord Holland.

there to-day and look up at the windows of the very rooms in which he lived and wrote ; and if you like, you may visit, in a neighboring street, the old “King’s Arms Tavern” where he used to spend many hours to escape from bickerings or sullenness at home.



HOLLAND HOUSE, FROM THE NORTH.

Meanwhile Addison and poor Dick Steele had had some misunderstandings. They seem to us now needless ones ; gay, good humored Steele never could have cherished bitterness, but in those days Addison seems to have withdrawn somewhat from his old asso-

ciations. In 1718 Steele brought out a paper against a certain bill in Parliament, and Addison replied to it. The great essayist was ill at this time. We can fancy him at Holland House, delighting in its ancient glory and yet somewhat dulled by his wife's companionship. George the First was reigning over England and a German element had not improved the dull court life at Kensington or Hampton-Court, but Addison cared little for levees and drawing-rooms and tea parties with pretty maids-of-honor. His illness made rapid strides, and we are told that when confined to his bed, he sent for his reprobate step-son, hoping the thoughtless Earl might receive a warning. "See," he said calmly, "how a Christian may die!" Fancying he had done the poet Gay some injury he called him near to ask his pardon. Gay could remember nothing against Addison, but freely gave him what he asked. On the 19th of June, 1719, Addison died; leaving only one child, a daughter, who lived to old age but never married.

Steele had been thinking remorsefully of his debts for a long time. Under all his gayety and recklessness there must have been something of strong honest purpose, after all, and it is pleasant to find that we need not bid good-bye to poor "Dick" without seeing the best and noblest part of his nature. His wife,

his "dearest Prue," had died in 1718, leaving him with one son and two daughters. He retired to an estate he had inherited in Wales, there to economize and pay his debts. It was while living here, towards the end of the reign of George I., that his health broke down, but he bore his illness with wonderful cheerfulness. On summer evenings he used to be carried out to see the country lads and lassies dancing on the green after hay-making or hop-picking, and sometimes gave a gown or a ribbon to some pretty maiden whose steps were lightest. They all loved him. His daughters clung fondly to him when his only son, Eugene, was dead. Every creditor was paid in full ; and Sir Richard Steele met his last hour quietly and serenely on the 1st of September, 1629 ; ten years after the death of the beloved friend of his boyhood.

FROM NO. 106 OF *The Spectator*.

( Sir Roger entertains the *Spectator* at his country-house. The way of life there described. )

Having often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger DeCoverly to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country-house where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations.

Sir Roger, who is well acquainted with my humor, lets me rise and go to bed when I please; dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit; sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him he only shows me at a distance. As I have been walking in his fields I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge; and I have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family because it consists of sober and staid persons; for, as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants, and, as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him. By this means his domestics are all in years and grown old with their master. You would take his valet-de-chambre for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has

the looks of a privy-counsellor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a gray pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness, out of regard to his past services though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe the joy that appeared in the countenance of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master ; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good-nature engages everybody to him ; so that when he is pleasant upon any of them all his family are in good humor, and none so much so as the person whom he diverts himself with. On the contrary, if he coughs or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler who is a very pleasant man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields is a very venerable man, who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation. He heartily loves Sir Roger and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependent.

## X.

## ALEXANDER POPE AND HIS FRIENDS.

A boy's glimpse of Dryden — Pope's childhood — A visit to London — His mother's reminiscence — Boyish friendships — His first publisher — A desperate venture — Sudden popularity — "The Rape of the Lock" — Pope's villa at Twickenham — His personal appearance — The Prince of Wales and his court at Richmond — Lady Mary Wortley Montague and the "Kit-Kats" — Lord Hervey — Life of a Maid-of-Honor in 1730 — Kneller's portrait of Lady Mary — Pope's enmity — Later works — Writers and celebrities of his day — His last hours.

ONE afternoon while the poet Dryden sat in his "Winter-chair" at "Will's," the door was opened by a member of the well-known coterie who led by the hand a delicate but pretty boy of twelve. The child was all eager curiosity to look upon the great poet Dryden, and had persuaded the gentleman

to bring him to the coffee-house. Dryden received him most kindly, talked pleasantly to the shy curious child, and, when he left him, little thought that he had patted the head of a future poet who was to succeed him in fame and position.

The boy was ALEXANDER POPE, who, beginning thus early to worship Dryden, continued later in life to hold him as his model in the art of verse-making, and never forgot the one glimpse he had had of the great poet and dramatist.

Alexander Pope was born on the twenty-second of May, 1688, in Lombard Street, London; but his father removed with his family soon afterwards to Binfield, a pretty town not far from Winchester. Young Pope was, we are told, a very pretty and graceful child and remarkable for his sweetness of temper; later his figure acquired a painful deformity of which he was always morbidly ashamed, and it affected not only his appearance but his disposition.

He was sent to school at Twiford; but having written a satire on his teacher he was dismissed, and after that his education seems to have gone on much as he chose to conduct it.

“He set to learning Latin and Greek, by himself, about twelve,” his mother afterwards told James Spence, “and when he was about fifteen resolved

that he would go up to London and learn French and Italian." We, in the family, looked upon it as a wildish sort of resolution ; for, as his health would not let him travel, we could not see any reason for it. He stuck to it, went thither and mastered both those languages with an extraordinary despatch . . . He had had masters, indeed, but they were very indifferent ones and what he got was almost wholly owing to his own unassisted industry."

Up in London the boy was often allowed to visit the theatres ; but it is well he had no inclination to write comedies in the fashion of the day, for they were as coarse as the court of Charles the Second could have made them. While he was still a school-boy he wrote an epic poem, two lines of which he afterwards inserted in one of his last works, *The Dunciad*, quite unchanged. It is a couplet on the the circulation of the blood.

"As man's meanders to the vital spring  
Roll all their tides, then back their circles bring."

Much as he enjoyed London he had many congenial occupations in the country. He was deeply interested in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, and would take the book out into the woods and lie upon the grass for hours, reading and dreaming the visions Spenser's verse brought up.

Sir William Trumbull, an admirable scholar, lived near by and took a special fancy to the clever boy. Sir William had one of those fine country-houses which we now admire as specimens of "Queen Anne architecture," built of red brick with gables and tiles and countless windows; the rooms rambling and irregular; the halls broad, with panelled walls, and the staircases of beautiful polished oak.

The library in such a house, in 1700, was a very important room. Books were coming to be eagerly read, and in Sir William's library the shelves reached from floor to ceiling, well lined with volumes, including many French and Italian works as well as the English authors and the Latin and Greek classics.

No wonder young Pope delighted in visiting Sir William. We can picture him, the shy "sweet-faced boy with a voice like a nightingale," \* sitting in one of the deep-seated windows with a pile of books before him, or talking with Sir William about all the writers of the day. The nobleman took a great interest in his young friend, as I have said, and made him his constant companion riding or driving, encouraging him to talk upon every subject that occurred to his active enthusiastic mind; read Latin and Greek with him and sometimes bits from the

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\* Spence.

French and Italian writers of the day, — Racine and Boileau were writing then in France, and a very clever society of ladies were known as “Les Precieuses.” All this was an education to young Pope and when, a few years later, he established himself in London he wrote in as finished and elegant a style as if he was a graduate from Oxford or Cambridge.

In 1711, one Mr. Lewis, an obscure bookseller in Russell Street, announced a poem by Mr. Alexander Pope, entitled *An Essay on Criticism*. The book has been read, talked of, quoted and admired all the world over since that day; but in 1711 nobody knew “Mr. Alexander Pope,” and it lay unnoticed on the bookseller’s counter, while the young poet came daily from his lodgings to ask how it sold.

“It will *not* sell!” Lewis told him at last, with a certain contempt for the new author.

Pope, in a rage, seized upon all the copies and directed them to every well-known nobleman in England. The result was that Lewis’ shop was presently besieged by applications for the new poem, and it was noticed most favorably by Addison in *The Spectator*.

Well then, you can understand how Mr. Pope was received among the literary and reading people of London. His slight figure was constantly seen at

coffee-houses and in the fashionable drawing-rooms of the day. Addison, Steele, and the great Lord Bolingbroke were his friends, and his career was fairly begun.

It is said that he was, to a certain degree, insincere in his manner with people ; but the insincerity was always about trifles. Lady Bolingbroke said he "played the politician about cabbages and turnips." He was by nature somewhat jealous and suspicious. Instead of disregarding his personal defects he fancied people were ridiculing them, and this made him quick to give or take offence ; but in spite of all that is said against his disposition, certain acts of his life, certain constant friendships, show how tender and loving and generous he could be.

Soon after the *Essay on Criticism*, appeared the famous *Rape of the Lock*, a poem founded on a very foolish incident. Lord Petre, a well-known nobleman of the day, had, half in fun, half in earnest, stolen a lock of hair from Miss Arabella Fermor, a famous beauty. The jest was taken seriously by her family and produced an estrangement, though they had lived in great friendship up to this time.

"A common acquaintance and well-wisher to them both," said Pope to Spence, "desired me to write a poem and make a jest of it and laugh them together

again. It was with this view I wrote *The Rape of the Lock*, which was well received and had its effect in the two families."

The poem was read all over England. Its satire was, of course, very keen, and parts of it would be considered inelegant to-day; but, although written in a jesting spirit, it contains some exquisite lines which are among Pope's very best.

Many other poems followed, and then Pope began his famous translation of Homer, an immense undertaking. His friends subscribed largely for the work and he received enough from it to purchase his villa at Twickenham, a beautiful spot on the Thames about ten miles above London. His father had died and he was tenderly devoted to his mother, who came to live with him at Twickenham where they were very happy together.

The villa, which was soon known to all the wits, statesmen, and scholars of the day, was not a large one but it was very comfortable. On one side it looked out upon the road; on the other a pretty lawn sloped down to the river. There were three tunnels under the lawn, one of which Pope transformed by means of shells and glass into a grotto. The tunnels led to pleasure gardens which he had beautifully laid out, making a great improvement upon the stiff Dutch

style of landscape gardening which William and Mary had introduced. \*

At this time Pope was barely over thirty years of age, but his infirmities made him look older. He is always spoken of as a "little man," and as such, with a painful hump on his shoulders, with a well-featured but pale and rather careworn face, with a charming voice and slow, rather formal manners, we can picture him, well dressed in the fashion of the day, his wig carefully curled, his grey coat, his knee breeches, his linen and ruffles spotlessly neat, his high-heeled shoes, his three-cornered hat and gold-headed cane with silk tassel, all orderly and precise.

When Pope retired to Twickenham he drew around him a delightful circle of friends. Near by, at Richmond, was the palace of the Prince of Wales (later George II.); and his wife, the Princess Caroline, though rather an unprincipled woman or, at least, too much given to overlooking vice in the court society, was well educated, a brilliant talker and fond of scholarly men and women.

The little court at Richmond was famous for its wit and beauty. The Ladies-in-Waiting were celebra-

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\* "Pope's Villa" at Twickenham is still to be seen. The house has been almost entirely altered and rebuilt during the present century, but the grounds and grotto remain intact as Pope left them. The place was sold at auction April 1878, for £14,000 — about \$70,000.

ted by all the poets of the day. Two of these, Mary Lepell and Mary Bellenden, were among the most beautiful women in England, and to the coterie was often added a third Mary, so that the trio were known as "the three Marys." "Saucy Molly," as Miss Lepell was called, and "Beautiful Bellenden" were gay, light-hearted damsels, virtuous and well-principled in their conduct. The third Mary was Lady Mary Wortley Montague, and when she made her appearance at Richmond and Twickenham she was already famous as a traveler, a wit, and a beauty.

Lady Mary was the daughter of the Earl of Kingston, and at an early age showed signs of the greatest precocity. Not only was she talented but extremely pretty, and her first introduction to society is quite famous. It was at the "Kit-Kat" club.

I have already mentioned this club, to which so many noted writers as well as wits and statesmen belonged. It was made up of thirty-nine whig gentlemen, and the meetings were held at a tavern in Shire Lane kept by a famous cook named Christopher (or "Kit") Kat, from whom the club took its name. I might tell you page after page of entertaining stories about the people in this famous club and their sayings and doings, but we must not neglect Lady Mary. Her father, the earl, was one of the "Kit-Kats," and



Lady Mary Wortley Montague and the Ki-Kats. (From "Old and New London.")



one night when the club were drinking their usual toasts he was called upon to name a new beauty who should hold the place of honor for a year. The earl proposed his daughter, but the gentlemen declared they had never seen her.

"Well then, you shall," cried the earl, and forthwith a servant was despatched to bring the little Lady Mary from her home, where she was fast asleep.

The "Kit-Kats" waited for the arrival of the new beauty, and fancy their surprise when a pretty, fair-haired child, dressed in the then prevailing fashion for children, a pink silk gown, rather long, with a Watteau-pleated back and rich lace trimmings, was brought in and put down in the middle of the table according to the earl's commands.

The thirty-nine gentlemen hailed her arrival with almost uproarious enthusiasm. She was handed about from one to another, amusing them with her witty little speeches and quaint questions; and her bright, beautiful face certainly merited the toast which was unanimously drank in her honor. Her name was scratched upon the glass according to the usual custom, and little Lady Mary was taken home after an hour of such intense happiness, she used to say in after years, as she had never known since.

She had but a dull life for years after that. Her father was a tyrannical man and tried to force her into a rich marriage with a man she hated ; but she was already privately engaged to a scholarly gentleman, Mr. Edward Wortley, with whom she eloped while preparations for her wedding with the rich suitor were going on.

Mr. Wortley was sent as ambassador to the East, and Lady Mary accompanied him on his travels. From Germany and Turkey she wrote delightful letters and descriptions which were afterwards published and became famous books ; and, returning to England, she introduced inoculation as a preventive of small-pox, a disease which had hitherto been terribly fatal, defying the skill of European physicians.

She was very clever and brilliant in conversation, and at the same time graceful and beautiful in person, all of which, added to her fame as a traveler, made her a welcome addition to the Princess's circle at Richmond. At Pope's earnest desire Mr. Wortley purchased a house at Twickenham, and Lady Mary was soon established as one of the favorite Ladies-in-Waiting. Lord Hervey was a member of the coterie ; a handsome, clever but effeminate young man, who privately married "Saucy Miss Molly" and whom Pope ridiculed, later as "Lord Fanny."

Pope and Lady Mary used sometimes to row from Twickenham to Richmond, or to Hampton Court. Lord Hervey, Sir Robert Walpole, Miss Bellenden, the poet Gay, and sometimes Dean Swift, would meet them and enliven the rather dull routine of court attendance with gay conversation, which we wish had been reŕcorded.

“We all agreed,” Pope said after one of these meetings, “that the life of a Maid-of-Honor was of all things the most miserable, and wished that every woman who envied it had a specimen of it. To eat Westphalia ham in the morning, ride over hedges and ditches on borrowed hacks, come home in the heat of the day with a fever . . . simper for an hour and catch cold in the Princess’s apartment. From thence, as Shakespeare has it, to dinner with what appetite they may ; and, after that, till midnight, walk, work or think as they please. I can easily believe no lone house in Wales, with a mountain or rookery, is more contemplative than this Court ; and, as a proof of it, I need only tell you Miss Lepell walked with me three or four hours by moonlight and we met no creature of any quality but the King, who gave audience to the Vice Chamberlain, all alone, under the garden wall.”

But there were merry days to remember at Twick-

enham, and even Hampton Court pleasures were regretted by Miss Bellenden after she married and left them forever. At Twickenham, Pope persuaded Lady Mary to sit for her portrait in her 'Turkish costume to the famous Court painter, Sir Godfrey Kneller.

The picture is very beautiful, and as we look at it now it suggests the days in which it was painted, calling up other pictures, other figures, and becomes, as it were, full of life and animation. We can fancy Lady Mary, lovely in gauze and satin, with the becoming turban, standing in the centre of a large sumptuous room with a background of rich drapery, Kneller painting in quick careful strokes at his easel near the window, while little Pope, eager, admiring and enthusiastic, leans over his chair watching every pencil stroke and bit of color laid on.

In and out of the scene come the merry, laughing court ladies, all of whom Kneller painted; the poet Gay, writer of pastorals; Lord Hervey, who belonged to a race so peculiar that Lady Mary used to say the world was divided into "men, women and Herveys;" dignified, critical Mr. Wortley; honest Doctor Garth; perhaps the good-natured German Queen herself.

You can fancy them talking the while, not only of Kneller's painting of Lady Mary's novel costume but



Alexander Pope.

[“This is the only portrait that was ever drawn of Mr. Pope at full length. It was done without his knowledge, as he was deeply engrossed in conversation with Mr. Allen in the gallery, at Prior Park, by Mr. Hoare, who sat at the other end of the gallery. Pope would never have forgiven the painter had he known it: he was too sensible of the deformity of his person to allow the whole of it to be represented. This drawing, therefore, is exceedingly valuable as it is an unique of this celebrated poet.” — *From Warton's Edition of Pope, published 1797.*]



of London topics of the day ; of the new books, satires, poems, etc., Pope saying something sharp and witty, Lady Mary retorting cleverly ; Lord Hervey, with an air of affectation, saying something really sensible ; Molly Lepell and Miss, or ( as they then said of a young lady in society, ) *Mrs.* Bellenden lamenting some social disappointment, or complaining of the monotony of court life, or of the Prince of Wales' stupidities.

It seems strange to turn away from these good-humored friendships and learn that Pope afterwards quarrelled bitterly with Lady Mary and Lord Hervey ; and, not content with this, wrote some malicious satires in which Lady Mary was ridiculed as " Sappho " and Hervey as " Lord Fanny."

Lady Mary protested that she never knew the cause of Pope's enmity ; but it probably rose from a simple occurrence which shows how sensitive the poor little poet must have been. He was one day holding forth about his admiration for Lady Mary, and some of his flights of fancy, I suppose, struck her as absurd ; so she inconsiderately burst out laughing. This fact she herself related as the only reason she could think of for his hatred of her. The war between them was carried on quite publicly ; for, in those days, every personal quarrel among clever

people got into print. Pope's satires on Lady Mary were most vindictive and she retorted cruelly. All the town watched the unhappy contest, and, to this day, the friendship and hatred of the two are famous.

Pope's most celebrated poem, the *Essay on Man*, was published in 1733. Through all the century it was looked upon as a model of elegant and finished verse ; and, even to this day, it is greatly admired, though the lines sound somewhat stiff and formal to modern ears. Not long after this, Pope united with Dean Swift in publishing three volumes of *Miscellanies*, which provoked a torrent of rage and countless lampoons and libels from the minor writers and public men of the day. To all of these Pope replied in *The Dunciad*, one of the most stinging and powerful satires ever written.

In *The Dunciad* he held up to ridicule the horde of petty scribblers who lived, wrote and starved in Grub Street, a miserable part of London. He dragged their wretched ways of life, their quarrels, lampooning, and blackmail before the public. Some critics have thought Pope did literature a service in this ; others that he degraded the honest toil of authors and made their poverty and hard lives appear only contemptible. However that may be, the subject seems to be unsuited to the pen of a great poet, and

much of the satire sounds malicious and cruel in the extreme.

Cowper, a poet who came later, said he could hardly believe that the same hand which wrote *The Dunciad* should have written *The Dying Christian* and the *Universal Prayer*, in which occur these lines :

“ That mercy I to others show,  
That mercy show to me.”

Pope was true to many of his friends. He loved Gay, and Doctor Garth, and Bolingbroke devotedly, and they clung to him. He worshipped his mother and could never show her too much attention and honor ; but jealousy, and a contempt for his own personal defects, which he exaggerated, made him bitter, and his fondness for the dangerous art of satire made him cruel to his enemies.

Pope had begun his career in the reign of Queen Anne ; he had filled an honored place in the courts of George I. and George II. ; he lived to see Gay, Atterbury, Addison, Steele and the famous Duchess of Marlborough, “ Queen Sarah,” end their career. Isaac Newton, the great philosopher, had discovered the laws of Gravitation and Light and died while Pope was reaching the height of his fame. In his time Allan Ramsay, a Scotch poet, had become famous and established a literary circle in Edinburgh. Letter-writ-

ing had become a popular art. Samuel Richardson had written *Pamela*, the first famous English novel ; and Henry Fielding, a cousin of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, had answered it in a half-satirical novel called *Joseph Andrews*. Pope lived to see all this ; but at last, enfeebled by disease, he withdrew almost entirely from public view to end his days at Twickenham.

Bolingbroke, Spence, Hooke, and his old friend Mrs. Anne Arbuthnot, were with him at this time. We read of one day when he was carried down to the dinner-table to see them all together. Soon after this his illness increased ; he had only intervals of consciousness, but in these he was always asking lovingly for his friends.

"It seemed," said Spence to Lord Bolingbroke, "as if his humanity had outgrown his understanding."

"It was so," said Lord Bolingbroke, and then he added, Spence tells us, "I never in my life knew a man who had so tender a heart for his particular friends, or a more general friendship for mankind. I have known him these thirty years and value myself more for that man's love than—" Bolingbroke's voice was lost in tears, his head sank and he could say no more.

Just before he died, Pope said : “I am so certain of the soul’s being immortal that I seem to feel it within me, as it were, by intuition.”

In the evening of the same day, May 30th, 1744, Pope grew gradually weaker ; but they did not know, Spence says, the exact time of his death, for his departure was so easy that it was imperceptible even to the standers-by.

## WRITERS OF THE PERIOD.

ALEXANDER POPE. 1688 — 1744. Poet. Wrote "Essay on Criticism;" "Rape of the Lock;" "Messiah;" "Essay on Man;" "Dying Christian;" "Universal Prayer," etc. Translations of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey," (aided by Browne and Fenton in the latter); "The Dunciad" (a satire); "Miscellanies," etc.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON. 1642 — 1727. Philosopher and scientist. Wrote a great many works on theoretical and applied science, chiefly in Latin.

JOSEPH ADDISON. 1672 — 1719. Essayist and poet. Wrote many prose essays for the "Tatler, Spectator, Guardian," etc. Poems: "The Campaign"; "Tragedy of Cato," etc.; four hymns and various Latin odes.

SIR RICHARD STEELE. 1671 — 1729. Essayist. Chiefly known as the originator of the *Tatler, Spectator, Guardian*, to which he contributed.

JONATHAN SWIFT, Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. 1667 — 1745. Clergyman, humorist, and essayist. Wrote "Gulliver's Travels;" "The Tale of a Tub;" and various political and satirical papers. Edited *The Examiner*.

DANIEL DEFOE. 1661 — 1731. Wrote Robinson Crusoe;" "The Journal of the Plague."

MATTHEW PRIOR. 1664—1721. Poet. Wrote (aided by Montagu) "The Country Mouse and the City Mouse" (a satire upon Dryden's Hind and Panther), "Carmen Seculare;" "Solomon and Alma," etc.

JOHN GAY. 1688—1732. Poet. Wrote "The Shepherd's Week" (In six pastorals); also "The Beggar's Opera;" and an opera called "Polly."

JAMES THOMPSON. 1700—1748. Poet. Wrote "The Seasons;" "The Castle of Indolence," etc.

RICHARD SAVAGE. 1696—1743. Poet. Wrote "The Wanderer," etc.

GEORGE FARQUHAR. 1678—1707. Dramatist.

COLLEY CIBBER. 1671—1751. Poet Laureate to George II. Actor and dramatist. Cibber condensed and revised many of Shakespeare's plays so as to adapt them better for the stage. His "acting version" of Shakespeare is the one used in theatres to-day.

JEREMY COLLIER. 1650—1726. Clergyman and moralist. Chiefly known for his attack on the dramatists of the Restoration.

JOHN ARBUTHNOT, M. D. 1675—1734. Wit and scholar. Wrote "History of John Bull" (a satire on the Duke of Marlborough).

EPHRAIM CHAMBERS. — 1740. Scholar and founder of *Chamber's Cyclopaedia*.

HENRY ST. JOHN, Lord Bolingbroke. 1678—1751. Political writer and speaker.

FRANCIS ATTERBURY, Bishop of Rochester. 1662—1732. Intimate friend of Pope, Swift, etc., and celebrated for his sermons and letters.

RICHARD BENTLEY. 1661—1742. Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Regius Professor of Divinity. The greatest classical critic of his day in England.

JOSEPH BUTLER, D. D. 1692—1752. Wrote the "Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature."

PHILIP DODDRIDGE. 1702 — 1751. Dissenting Clergyman. Wrote "Evidences of Christianity," etc.

#### MINOR WRITERS.

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE. 1650 — 1729. Poet and essayist. Wrote "The Creation" ( a philosophical poem ) etc.

THOMAS TICKELL. 1686 — 1740. Wrote "Colin and Lucy" ( a ballad ) ; and an "Elegy on Addison ;" translated the first book of Homer's "Iliad."

MRS. ELIZABETH ROWE. 1674 — 1737, and MRS. MARY AS-TELL. 1668 — 1731. Wrote religious and moral books with a view to improving the condition of womankind.

#### MINOR DRAMATISTS.

Theophilus Cibber, Mrs. Charlotte Clarke, Thomas Southerne, Thomas D'Urfey, John Dennis, Mrs. Susannah Centlivre, Mrs. Catherine Cockburn, Robert Dodsley.

#### MISCELLANEOUS WRITERS.

Earl of Shaftesbury ; George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne ; William Pulteney, Hon. Charles Boyle, Conyers Middleton, Ambrose Phillips, Nicholas Rowe, Rev. Robert Blair, John Hughes, George Granville, William Walsh, Elijah Fenton, Sir Samuel Garth, Gilbert West, William Broome, Isaac Browne, Thomas Cook. \*

\* The above are the only important writers of Pope's period.

## XI.

## DOCTOR JOHNSON AND HIS TIMES. [1709—1784.]

A glance at Johnson's nature, appearance and career — Early days at Lichfield — Touched by Queen Anne for "King's Evil" — Goes to Oxford University — His singular marriage — Opens a school — David Garrick as a pupil and comrade — Johnson enters the literary world of London; its sad condition — Starving authors in Grub Street — Richardson, the printer and novelist — Genius and patronage — Fashion and luxury of the town — Johnson writes for *The Rambler* and the *Gentleman's Magazine* — Compiles his famous dictionary — Death of his wife — Johnson receives a pension from George III. — His first meeting with Boswell — Tom Davies' dinner and tea-parties — Leicester Square in 1766; a dinner with Sir Joshua Reynolds — A midnight revel with "Beau" and "Lanky" — Burke, the statesman and a notable company.

FROM Pope we come to a man who ruled the English world of letters for quarter of a century; and his very name, SAMUEL JOHNSON, calls up memories of a host of noted people among whom he lived as

oracle, critic, friend. When I look at his long and curious career I hesitate how to introduce him to you. Whether as the Lichfield schoolmaster, starved out and coming to London to seek his fortune, the struggling poet and literary hack in Grub Street, the busy editor in the great room over St. John's Gate, the rising essayist, the oracle of the coffee-house, the philosopher hidden in his garret at work, the autocrat of tea-parties and clubs, the faithful affectionate friend, the merciless critic, the quaint traveller, the angry loud-voiced pedant, the gentle Christian — he was so many things, he led so many lives, I may say, for he seemed to combine in his ponderous person character enough for a dozen men. In the days we are to know him best, we must picture him as a great, burly man, with a face scarred by illness, a nervous manner, a rolling gait, a rich, sonorous voice, and under a gruff manner the tenderest heart imaginable. We have to think of him ruling a club dinner, dining at a famous painter's in Leicester Square, supping at the "Mitre" tavern in Fleet Street, sought after, watched, respected, feared, the great man of letters and social lion, while around him are grouped statesmen, artists, poets, dramatists and novelists of the reign of George III. He is always the central figure, his voice the one that lingers longest in our ears ; but

something must first be told you of his early days, before this season of social prosperity began, and during the time when authorship had sunk to a level very pitiful in that dismal region of Grub Street.

Samuel Johnson seems scarcely to have had any youth. He was born at Lichfield, in 1709. His father was a bookseller, well thought of, but poor. The boy was painfully delicate, nervous and inclined to indolence. His school fellows, we are told, humoring his fancies, carried him to school, sometimes, two of them walking together and making a sort of chair for him, with their arms and shoulders. In those days it was still a superstition that a touch from the sovereign could heal certain diseases; and, believing in this, honest Michael Johnson carried his boy up to London, that he might see Queen Anne. When Dr. Johnson was an old man he used to recall the scene; the palace corridor, glittering and stately, the Queen, a fair lady, in a long black hood, and sparkling with jewels, who stretched out a round arm, touching his head with her hand. Unfortunately the cure did not follow. Johnson grew to manhood, and reached old age afflicted with nervous illness and a tendency to melancholy.

We must only glance over his young days. He went to Lichfield Grammar school, and then, through

some friends' kindness, to Oxford. At the University he was a proud, melancholy lad, whom the gay and rich young gentlemen in his class treated with some disdain. The Lichfield boy, destined to be famous, shrank from joining in sports or festivities to which he could bring only talent, and so he passed by unnoticed or forgotten. His father's death ; his marriage at the age of twenty-seven to an elderly widow ; his search for work ; his opening a school ; all these events come in quick succession. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1736, appeared the following advertisement :

At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Greek and Latin Languages by Samuel Johnson.

The school failed dismally ; but one of his pupils was his friend as well — a slight, lithe young fellow with a shrewd, gay countenance, a wonderful knack of imitation and recitation, and whose name, David Garrick, was destined to become famous. Twenty years later, in England, about 1773, Johnson and Garrick determined together to try their luck in London.

It must have been, I think, a notable journey. Johnson, grave beyond his years, yet with plenty of fun lying hidden under his solemn exterior ; "Davy" as Garrick was always called, full of pranks and gai-

ety ; and the plain-featured stout Mrs. Johnson, who worshipped her husband and was adored in return : these three set off in the stage coach for London ; Johnson with nothing better in his pocket than a MS. tragedy, and Garrick armed with a few letters of introduction. When they arrived in the metropolis their paths diverged. Johnson turned to literature, Garrick to the wine trade which he soon left for the stage.

What did literature at that day (1737) signify ? The "Augustan Era" of Queen Anne's reign had passed away ; authors were to be counted by dozens, but they were starving in Grub Street. Poets, essayists, philosophers, who were not yet famous, were content to sleep on a bench at a public house, glad to possess two-pence for a morning meal ; with them, work was profitable only when they got a rich patron to whom, with a great flourish, they dedicated their verses or essays.

We read of Boyse, a good enough writer in his way, sitting up in bed, with his arms through two holes in a blanket, waiting for his dinner. Otway, the dramatist, died of starvation. Richard Savage, a man of genius, ended a miserable life in jail. Grub Street was a poverty-stricken place, and for writers of moderate skill there was little hope indeed.

Some few literary men were well-known and prosperous like Richardson, the author of *Pamela*, who kept a printing establishment which kept him ; Fielding, the author of *Joseph Andrews* ; Young, the author of *Night Thoughts* ; Collins, the poet, and Hume the historian. These men were all well-known.

Music was popular ; cheap periodicals were popular ; satire and lampooning were popular ; but patronage of the right sort was not popular, and even genius had hard work to live. Such was the state of the literary world when Johnson came to try his fortune in London.

Outside of Grub Street the town was never so gay and splendid. Beautiful new squares had been built on every side ; social life was delightful. It was the fashion in those days for ladies to study the art of conversation ; and how enchanting they must have been in their rich brocades and high powdered wigs, with their soft lace, and patches, and high-heeled shoes, and painted fans. The gentlemen, too, were as fine as masqueraders, and as gallant and elegant as the figures in a court picture. The King and Queen were more German than English in their tastes. The Prince of Wales was a riotous pleasure-seeker. Society outside of the poor scribbler's quarter was as bold, and brilliant, and splendid as a fairy tale.

But poor Johnson saw nothing of society then. He went to work at one thing after another ; wrote poems, edited a semi-weekly paper called *The Rambler*, and for three years was quite unnoticed. During a part of this time he was connected with the *Gentleman's Magazine* ;\* and you can see to-day the great room over the ancient St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, where he toiled and slaved.

Finally he began the compiling of an English Dictionary, and it was this work which made him famous. It was an immense labor, both for the author and the publishers, and Johnson's gruffness must more than once have come to the surface. When the last sheet was carried to the publisher, Johnson inquired of the messenger :

"What did he say?"

"Sir," answered the boy, "he said 'Thank God, I have done with him!'"

"I am glad," said Johnson, "that he thanks God for anything!" \*

Other works of various kinds, essays, reviews, and the like, followed ; but he was known as "Dictionary Johnson," and, excepting "Rasselas," a story, and his "Lives of the Poets" written later, it is the last

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\* Still in existence.

\* Leslie Stephen's "Samuel Johnson."

literary work of value in his life. It lifted him at once into fame.

But soon after he knew a real grief. His "dear Letty," the elderly but beloved wife, died, and he mourned her truly to his last hour. He supported always an old woman she had been fond of; he wrote most lovingly to his step-daughter; little trifles, books and the like which had been hers, he labelled "My dear Letty's," "My beloved wife's" etc., and laid them away sacredly from dust and sight. Those who knew only the gruff man, powerful in language, apt to be contemptuous and domineering, forgot sometimes that, beneath it all, a heart tender and constant was beating with friendliness for those he loved, and with patient remembrance of an old sorrow.

When George III. came to the throne Johnson received a pension of £300 (\$1500) a year; a sum quite sufficient for all his daily needs. His circle of friends now widened upon every side. Henceforth we have to think of him as a man of society; the chief in every circle, the friend of all the famous people of the day.

It was in 1763 that Johnson met the man whose name is famous as his biographer.

James Boswell was a young Scotchman with a mania for the society of great people. But his great am-

bition was to meet and know Johnson. One evening in May, Boswell was invited, for the purpose, to tea in the parlor behind Mr. Davies' bookshop in Russell Street, Covent Garden. Davies was quite well-known to the literary men of the day. He was fond of giving them fine dinners, and they did not disdain to drink tea in his back parlor with Mrs. Davies, — a pretty woman and quite a wit, — in a gay flowered chintz gown tucked up over a white laced petticoat, with mitts and a fan, and a tremendous edifice of curls and puffs on her head, making the tea and serving them with it in delicate egg-shell china cups, while a black boy stood by with his salver of cake and a bit of damson tart for the gentlemen.

On this May evening Boswell kept an anxious eye upon the door which, at last, swung open with a vigorous push. Boswell, looking out, saw a great, burly, middle-aged man coming in with a rolling gait, laughing good-naturedly as Davies rushed to meet him; then drawing his face up curiously, peering into the parlor, twitching his hands with a nervous air, frowning, puffing, laughing all together; his voice deep and sonorous, and, despite his slovenly dress, the infirmity of his health, his evident eccentricities, having a dignity which commanded respect. He stopped short and looked somewhat contemptuously at the ea-

ger young man from Scotland, who was ready to fall down upon the ground and worship him.

"Don't tell him where I come from," Boswell whispered to Davies, for he knew Johnson's hatred of Scotland.

"From Scotland," cried Davies in sport.

"Mr. Johnson," said Boswell, "I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it."

"That, sir," retorted Johnson, "I find is what a good many of your countrymen cannot help!"

But in spite of some disagreements this first even-



ing, the two were soon friends. Boswell hung upon Johnson, following him, tormenting, pleasing, bothering, amusing him. He was one of the vainest, silliest of men; yet he contrived to write one of the most entertaining biographies ever penned, when Johnson was dead and gone.

"Who is that Scotch cur at Johnson's heels?" was asked of Goldsmith.

"He is not a cur," said Goldsmith in gentle scorn,

"He is only a burr. Tom Davies flung him at Johnson in sport and he has the faculty of sticking."

Yet there is no doubt Johnson was fond of him in a sort of way, although he was ready enough to make sport of him. On one occasion in company, Johnson was repeating some of the *Dunciad*, and Boswell ventured to say the lines were too good, — "too fine for such a poem — a poem on what?" said Boswell.

"Why," said Johnson, "on Dunces. It was worth while being a dunce in those days. Ah, sir!" he added, "hadst *thou* lived in those days!"

But who were the great men belonging to Johnson's famous circle? Who were its wits, its gentlemen of fashion, its scholars, artists, statesmen? If in fancy we picture Leicester Square on some spring evening about 1766, I think we shall find that a goodly company is assembling at a large, dignified-looking mansion, now Number Forty-seven. The rooms are still spacious; the stair-case massive oak; the windows wide and massive; but all the mirth, the dignity, the splendor of the old days has vanished.

Had we arrived on the evening in question, one hundred years ago, liveried servants both black and white would have received us. We should have been lighted up a staircase hung with pictures and ush-

ered into a stately drawing-room where the famous painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, would have received us ; for he was the master of the old house in Leicester Square whither so many steps were directed.

Picture him a gracious gentleman in a suit of buff satin and white lace, with an embroidered waistcoat, a diamond buckle, a powdered wig. His face is kindly, handsome and serene. I have just been looking at the portrait he painted of himself and I think I would like to have had his friendship, to have held his hand, and listened to the tones of his sweet, affectionate voice.

Sir Joshua was one of the prosperous men of the day. Dukes and duchesses sought his acquaintance ; but he was always simple in himself, quite free from affectation, and generous and kindly to all whom he met. His portraits have come down to us like heroes and heroines of a romance in his time. Beautiful women, noble-looking men, sweet, dimpled children ; and, in all, we see a touch of that which made the people he lived among call him "the sweet Sir Joshua."

And who are the guests at Sir Joshua's dinner ? There are Johnson and Boswell, of course, the former holding forth on some subject of the hour. Near by are lounging two handsome young men, foppish in

dress, dandified in air, yet they are Johnson's devoted admirers, Topham Beauclerk and Bennet Langton. The devotion of these two young men to John-



SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

son shows how gay and light a side there must have been to the "old bear's" nature.

One night "Beau" and "Lanky," as Johnson called them, had been supping together at a tavern, and about three in the morning they started off for

Johnson's rooms. They pounded at the door and Johnson appeared in his night-cap and armed with a poker. "Beau" and "Lanky" called out to him to join them.

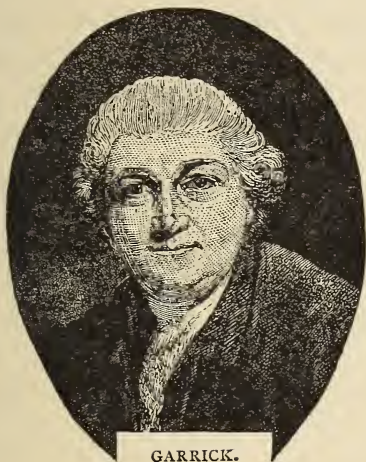
"What! is that you, you dogs?" cried Dr. Johnson, "I'll have a frisk with you!" And away he flew, dressed himself in an old suit of clothes, and, presently, behold the three going down Covent Garden, where the fruit and flower venders were just appearing with their blooming cart-loads to sell at day-break. They stopped at a tavern and brewed a bowl of punch; then took a boat to Billingsgate where the morning broke upon them in rich splendor. Langton deserted them to go off to a breakfast-party, but the great man and "Beau" kept up the frolic till mid-day.

"He'll be in *The Chronicle* for this," said Garrick when he heard of it.

Walking about Covent Garden to-day, we can fancy it echoing to the doctor's peals of laughter, to the fun and frolic of that night. One can see the queer trio — the elegant, be-ruffled young men and the great, broad-shouldered, carelessly-dressed figure of Johnson, his arms locked in theirs, his wit alive, his laughter as merry as a school-boy's.

But we must return to Sir Joshua's dinner-party. Near to Sir Joshua sits the poet Oliver Goldsmith

whose story, associated as it is with Johnson's, will come soon. And next is Mr. Burke, a young Irishman, known among literary men as the author of an *Essay on the Beautiful and the Sublime*; later, famous as the champion of the colonies in America and the



GARRICK.

greatest orator in the English House of Commons. And near by sits Horace Walpole, cynical, dignified, languid in air, talking in an undertone with Dr. Burney, a great musical authority, about the latest society gossip of the day; telling, no doubt, how Lady Mary Wortley Montague was growing "hideous" and

a "mere gossip." But Walpole hated Lady Mary, and his dislikes were always expressed with venom. Late in the evening in comes Garrick from the play, smiling, good-natured after his triumphs as *King Richard*.

The party breaks up amidst much laughter, wisdom, folly and friendliness. We can fancy Johnson and Goldsmith and Boswell going out together, crossing Leicester Square, where "link boys" were running hither and thither with torches or waiting to be hired; where sedan chairs were jostling each other; where coaches were lumbering by as the fine people of fashion returned from "Ranelagh" or "Vauxhall Gardens," or from some "Rout" as balls were then called.

Would we not like to have seen the prim old square at such an hour, brilliant with life and beauty; echoing to Johnson's footsteps, to Goldsmith's good-humored nonsense, to Garrick's bold sallies? Perhaps these three made their way to the "Mitre Tavern" in Fleet Street, before bidding good night. I can imagine Dr. Burney, the musician, turning down from the Square into St. Martin's Street, where he lived in the house Newton had formerly occupied, and where his clever daughter Fanny was writing away in her room up-stairs with bits of candle saved and hidden for the purpose.

Pass by Grub Street. Let us forget its toils and miseries, its petty mean ways. Look at these men of genius assembling together. Think of their gay, kindly friendship, their faces, their voices, their courteous fine airs or their awkward simplicity. When you read the books or look at the pictures they have left us, try to go back to their days and picture the scenes in which they lived, and wrote, and painted, and out of which they have vanished.

FROM DR. JOHNSON'S *Vanity of Human Wishes*.

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,  
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide.  
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,  
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire.  
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,  
Unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain.  
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield;  
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;  
Behold surrounding Kings their powers combine,  
And one capitulate, and one resign.

XII.

DR JOHNSON AND HIS TIMES. II.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH. [1728-1774.]

Parentage — Early struggles in London — Employed by Richardson, the novelist-printer — *The Bee* — Letters of a Chinese philosopher — *The Citizen of the World* — First meeting between Goldsmith and Dr. Johnson — Goldsmith in society — The “Literary Club” and its famous members — “Goldy” at work on *The Traveler* — His foolish manners — Johnson rescues him from his landlady — *The Vicar of Wakefield* — *The Jessamy Bride* — A tailor’s bill one hundred years ago — First performance of *She Stoops to Conquer* — Goldsmith’s histories — Anecdote of Gibbon — Goldsmith’s death and funeral.

ONE of the guests at the dinner-party of Sir Joshua, sketched in the last chapter, was OLIVER GOLDSMITH; poet, novelist and dramatist; one of Dr. Johnson’s dearest friends, one whom he loved even when he reproved, and who looked to him

with reverence and the honest affection of an Irish heart. In the London of Johnson's day, in those busy thoroughfares about Fleet street and the Temple, and the poorer lanes and courts branching off therefrom, in and out of the "Mitre" tavern, patiently toiling up steep flights of steps to his garret lodgings, Goldsmith's awkward figure and honest, kindly face were often seen : he had a word for every poor creature he passed, if not a penny which he could ill afford ; a laugh, a jest, a simple foolish word for the great men, who richer, stronger, wiser than he, yet loved him with something tender and pitying in their love. It is a sad enough story ; I pause before it with a sense of the patience, the sweetness, the sadness of that poor figure among those wise and witty gentlemen of one hundred years ago : but when we think of what Goldsmith wrote, his pure verse, his wonderful novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, we forget all else in the praise and admiration that is due to him.

Oliver Goldsmith was born at Pallas, in the County of Longford, Ireland, in 1728. He was the son of an Irish Protestant Clergyman, of good family but poor. I cannot follow with you all Oliver's boyhood ; you would find the story, however, full of interest ; but we must look at him as a man and an

author in the London of Dr. Johnson's day. It was in February, 1756, that Goldsmith after a vagabond journey found himself in London; he had tried various professions without success; but having received a doctor's degree, made up his mind to begin his English career as a physician. He sought employment at various chemists; but they laughed at his shambling figure and awkward speech, his threadbare coat and pitiful face; but one chemist at last sent him a patient, and soon after an old school-fellow met him in a London street dressed in quite a gay green-and-gold coat, declaring he was on the high road to success. But his efforts were in vain; he was so ill fed and poverty-stricken that his poorest patients found him out: one of these was a printer by trade, and while Dr. Goldsmith was attending him he ventured to say that his "master was very kind to clever gentlemen."

"And who is your master?" cried poor Goldsmith.

"He is Mr. Richardson," the man answered, "who has a printing-house in Salisbury Court, and writes novels."

Goldsmith sought the kind-hearted printer who offered him employment as his reader: more than that he was admitted to Richardson's parlor behind the shop, where he began to meet the literary men of

the day. Richardson never aimed at being a gentleman, although he wrote *Sir Charles Madison*, a novel which has a very fine gentleman for its hero. He must have been a curious man, egotistical, but very good-hearted. While he was writing *Pamela*, he used to read it aloud in MS. to an admiring circle of lady friends; he sitting in the centre dressed in an absurd morning gown, slippers and embroidered cap. As soon as *Pamela* appeared it became "the rage"; ladies of fashion would carry volumes of it to Ranelagh or Vauxhall Gardens, and there triumphantly display their possessions to less fortunate friends. There is too much of the coarseness of Richardson's day in his novels and those of Fielding and Smollett, who followed him, to make them agreeable reading to-day; but Richardson is called the "Father of the English novel."

Goldsmith seems not to have remained long with Richardson, but he turned his attention to literature as a means of subsistence. All sorts of stories are told of him at this time. We see him writing to order for a narrow-minded bookseller who watched every word and every penny: next in Green Arbour Court, a wretched alley in which he occupied a bare garret, grown familiar to all the ragged children and poor women of the neighborhood. He was so

threadbare in dress that he dared not venture out by daylight, but when dusk came Oliver would make his way into the courtyard to gratify the children with a few sweetmeats and the parents with a gay Irish tune on his flute, though he knew not where he was to get his supper. In this cheerless, vagabond sort of way his life went on for a time, but we soon hear of him as engaged on a periodical called *The Bee* which was somewhat better than the dozens of second-rate papers then floating about London. In this he chanced to write something pleasant of *Peregrine Pickle*, one of Smollett's novels. Smollett was about starting a new magazine, to be published by his friend Newberry, and desired Goldsmith's assistance. He found Green Arbour Court, made his way amid the wrangling of washerwomen, the cries of babies and fights of small boys, up the stone steps to Oliver's garret, a bare, shabby room with no touch of home or life in it save the one figure of the author, who stood up, pen in hand, to receive Smollett and his proposition. The result of the interview was that Goldsmith wrote not only for this magazine, but contributed to a daily paper called the *Public Ledger* a series of charming letters. These were supposed to be written by a Chinese philosopher visiting London; they were afterwards republished with others,

in two volumes entitled *The Citizen of the World*; wherein certain delightful characters, the "Man in Black," "Beau Gibbs," etc., become to us, as we read, as real and life-like as Addison's dear old "Sir Roger de Coverley."

It was about this time that the first notable meeting took place between Goldsmith and Dr. Johnson. I suppose they had seen each other before, but certainly in no formal fashion, until Mr. Percy, the author, arranged to bring them together. The day fixed upon was May 31, 1761, and Goldsmith was to give a supper. At the appointed hour, Percy called for the doctor at Inner Temple Lane; fancy his surprise upon finding Johnson, usually so slovenly in dress, quite a pattern of neatness; he had on a new suit of clothes, "a new wig, nicely powdered," says Percy, "and everything about him quite unlike himself!" Percy could not forbear asking him what it all meant.

"Why, sir," said Johnson, "I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice; and I am desirous this night to show him a better example!"

Unfortunately the example set was not a good one for Oliver; who, it appears, bloomed forth soon after

in some very brilliant attire, for which his tailor, Filby, sent his bill in vain. Goldsmith had meanwhile left Green Arbour Court and gone to live in better quarters in Wine Office Court. He was now associated with the leading literary men of the day in whose society we can pleasantly think of him.

In 1763 the famous "Literary Club" was started. Sir Joshua Reynolds suggested it to Dr. Johnson. Fourteen years before Johnson had established a club in Ivy Lane, but the members had either died or been dispersed. He caught at Reynold's idea, and spoke of it to Burke, who was at that time living in Queen Anne Street, not yet a famous man but well known and greatly admired by his friends. Burke was delighted with the suggestion and asked leave to introduce his father-in-law, Dr. Nugent, a Roman Catholic physician. Mr. Hawkins, an old member of the Ivy Lane Club, was also invited to join, and so were "Beau" and "Lanky" and Sir Joshua Reynolds; Chamier, one of the Secretaries of the Cabinet, became a member, and Goldsmith completed the number. Just as the club was ready to be inaugurated an old member of the Ivy Lane returned unexpectedly to England, and he was greeted with cheers by the little coterie. They decided to limit their number to twelve, and the place chosen

for their meetings was the "Turk's Head" tavern in Gerrard street, Soho, where they used to assemble every Monday night, at seven o'clock, and take turns in presiding in the chair of state.\* So commenced one of the most famous clubs ever known. As time passed, it came to be considered the greatest honor to be elected to membership of the "Literary," and it is said when Boswell was a candidate he could neither sit still, eat nor sleep, until his fate was decided. Politics were excluded, but the reputation of the club as "talkers" spread far and wide. Burke must have had a marvelous fascination of manner. Johnson said that if he were to take refuge with a stranger under a shed for five minutes, during a shower, "his companion would be sure to think him an extraordinary man." Burke talked brilliantly, but still he used to say Johnson did better. Somebody once expressed regret, in his presence, that Johnson had talked instead of Burke. "It was enough for me," said the generous Irishman, "to have rung the bell for him!"

Through various ups and downs Goldsmith went on, kindly, merry as ever, always in debt, always in good

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\*Later the evening was changed to Friday, and the meetings were held once a fortnight, only, during the Parliamentary season. The club is still in existence, and after many changes is known as "The Club" and meets at the Clarendon, in London.

humor. For some time he was at work in Islington, a part of London which was then quite in the suburbs, with green fields and blossoming hedgerows on every side. Here was the abode of one Mrs. Flemming, with whom he lodged from time to time. One day Sir Joshua, thinking it time he heard something of "Goldy," as the club was fond of calling him, went out to Islington to look him up. He knocked at "Goldy's" door, but received no answer; so he opened the door softly, and then stopped to smile at what he saw. There sat Goldsmith at his desk, in "rough and tumble" dress, his head turned ludicrously, his honest face beaming with good-natured fun while he held up his hand to guide a little absurd-looking dog in the performance of some tricks. Reynolds saw that he had been writing and approaching quietly looked over his shoulder. The ink was still wet upon these lines :—

"By sports like these are all their cares beguiled,  
The sports of children satisfy the child."

Goldsmith sprang up to welcome his friend, who little knew he had come in upon the composition of a poem destined to such world-wide fame as *The Traveller*. On the 19th of December, 1764, the following advertisement appeared in the *Public Advertiser*:

"This day is published, price 1-6, *The Traveller, or A Prospect of Society*; a poem by Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. Printed for J. Newberry, in St. Paul's Churchyard."

The poem was a perfect success, but so simple, nay foolish, were "Goldy's" sayings and many of his actions, that some of the club doubted if he wrote it, and believed it to be partly the work of the great Doctor. Johnson was annoyed by this, and aggravated by Oliver's serene disregard of what was said of it, for he went to the club as usual and took no pains to establish his claims. At the second meeting Chamier leaned across the table and said: "Mr. Goldsmith, what do you mean by the last word in the first line of your *Traveller*?

'Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow.'

Do you mean tardiness of locomotion?" Goldsmith was rattling away at some nonsense and cared nothing for Chamier's question. "Yes," he answered carelessly; whereupon Johnson fired up for him and said: "*No* sir, you did *not* mean tardiness of locomotion, you meant that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude."

"Ah!" said "Goldy" smiling good-humoredly. "Yes, that was what I meant."

No wonder the club were inclined to doubt his authorship; while Horace Walpole sneeringly called him an "inspired idiot."

And now comes the publication of Goldsmith's famous novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, with the appearance of which is associated a curious story: One day a messenger came to Johnson to say that Goldsmith was in great distress and desired to see his friend at once. Johnson sent a guinea and promised to follow it at once. Let us give the story in his own words:—

“I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea and had got a bottle of Maderia and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, saw its merits, and having gone to a book-seller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill.”

The novel was *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and in 1766 it was published. No novel has ever, I may venture to say, taken its place as a pure, domestic story. It is simple, but touching and elevating in

tone, the characters as real as living beings. There is the Wakefield parson, with his family and friends, his beautiful faith in God, his trust in divine mercy, his simple devotion to his wife and children, his miseries and his joys, his absurdities and those of his family, all of these belong to the whole world to-day, and remembering the pure and gentle lessons of morality taught in Goldsmith's page, we must check our laughter, we must forget his follies. For a little time let us only pause, and say, we honor him.

The *Vicar of Wakefield* and various other works



which followed it, might have brought Goldsmith ease, but for his continued imprudences. He went off on country visits; at one house we may fancy him silently, but tenderly watchful of one young face that of Miss Horneck whom called the "Jessamy Bride," but to whom he never dared utter a word of his devotion.

He was welcomed with delight at these country homes, where he dressed in the most extravagant

fashion as bills of the same poor Filby will show. Here is one of them :

Jan. 21.	To Syrian bloom satin grain and garter blue breeches,	£8.	2.	7.
Mar. 17.	“ Suit of clothes,—colour-lined with silk and gold buttons,	9.	7.	0.
	“ Suit of mourning,	5.	12	6.

and “etceteras” without end. While he was on his country visits his friends delighted in playing tricks upon him, generally to the ruin of his “sprigged” and “sateen” garments, but no one could make him vexed or ill-natured.

We must pass over the appearance of Goldsmith’s still favorite play of *The Good-Natured Man*, which, after various difficulties was produced in 1768. The poem of *The Deserted Village* came next, and, in 1772, he sent to the manager’s notice his since famous comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*.

In those days actors and actresses, as well as the managers of theatres, were very difficult to deal with, and poor Goldsmith was kept some time in agony of mind, not knowing what would be the final decision. “I entreat,” he wrote to Coleman, “you will relieve me from the state of suspense . . . take the play and let us make the best of it.”

This was finally done. The club set their clever

brains together for a name for "Goldy's" play, as Dr. Johnson wrote a friend, and on the night of its first appearance, a great tavern dinner was given, presided over by Johnson. All the club were there, jesting with and encouraging Goldsmith; but his painful anxiety was evident, even when he tried to laugh and say something in response. When all the rest made off for the theatre, Goldsmith, too wretched to join them, rushed off in the direction of Pall Mall, where a friend found him, later, struggling to keep up. At last he returned to the theatre, making his way in by a stage entrance. It so happened that the audience had been a very enthusiastic one, but as the poor author stole behind the scenes the one *hiss* of the evening reached his ears. He staggered and turned pale, but Coleman, the manager, called out, "Pshaw! Doctor, don't be afraid of a squib, when we've been sitting these two hours on a barrel of gunpowder!"

The success of the comedy was tremendous. "Did it make you laugh?" Goldsmith nervously asked a friend; "Exceedingly," was the answer. "Then that is all I require!" exclaimed poor "Goldy."\*

I wish that we might trace in these pages all the story of his life, but we must take leave of him with

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\*Northcole's *Life of Reynolds*.

only a brief mention of later days. He wrote various histories, one, that of *Animated Nature*, being specially famous, but his facts were often so absurdly incorrect that all later editions have been carefully revised. While he was writing his *History of Greece*, Gibbon, the famous historian, called upon him at his rooms at the Temple. Goldsmith, who was at work, asked Gibbon the name of the Indian King who gave Alexander the Great so much trouble. "Montezuma," replied Gibbon, in sport. Whereupon Oliver gravely wrote it down.\*

In spite of his reputation as an author, and wide circle of friends, the last years of his life were clouded by anxieties. His debts weighed upon him heavily. He was living in the Temple at Brick Court, and here one day he returned from a visit to Edgware, with a low nervous fever upon him. It was Friday, and he desired much to join his friends at the club; but on making the effort to dress, he found he was too weary, and gave himself up to his last illness.

"Is your mind at ease?" the doctor asked him one evening.

"No, it is not," answered poor Goldsmith, and these are the last words recorded of him.

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\* Forster's *Life of Goldsmith*.

It was on Monday, April 4th, 1774, he died. Those who had been with him hastened to tell the news to his friends. Sir Joshua was at work in his studio, in Leicester Square; hearing the news he flung down his brush and quitted his room for the day. Burke, when told of it, burst into an agony of tears. Johnson spoke of Goldsmith's death for years as if the loss had been but yesterday's. While poor "Goldy" lay dead in the room above, the staircase to Brick Court was crowded by the poor and miserable whom the gentle creature had encouraged or befriended. They passed in, these ragged, sorrowing friends, to look at him with tears and sobs and blessings on his name. The world outside remembered his follies with a pitying smile. "Was ever a poet so trusted!" exclaimed Johnson; and he might have added, "Was ever poet so beloved!"

He was buried in the Temple churchyard, quietly, because his debts were so numerous and well-known it was thought unwise to give an air of pomp and magnificence to his funeral; but many stood sorrowing about his tomb. When all were leaving, one man who had ridiculed the poet in life, was seen to linger, weeping violently, so strongly did "Goldy's" gentleness assert itself even to the mind of one who had laughed him to scorn.

The club met at Sir Joshua's to write their friend's epitaph. It is engraved under the marble medallion portrait of Goldsmith in the Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey, and perhaps it will be the most fitting ending to the little story I have told you :

“OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH,  
POET, NATURALIST, HISTORIAN,  
who left scarcely any kind of writing  
untouched,  
and touched nothing that he did not adorn :  
Whether smiles were to be stirred  
or tears,  
commanding our emotions, yet a gentle master :  
In genius lofty, lively, versatile,  
in style weighty, clear, engaging —  
The memory in this monument is cherished  
by the love of Companions,  
the faithfulness of Friends  
the reverence of Readers.  
He was born in Ireland,  
at a place called Pallas,  
(in the parish) of Forney (and county) of Longford,  
on the 29th Nov., 1731.  
Trained in letters at Dublin.  
Died in London,  
4th April, 1774.” \*

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\* The original inscription is in Latin, and the above is Forsters' translation. The date of Goldsmith's birth is incorrectly given in Westminster Abbey : it should be 1728.

FROM GOLDSMITH'S *Deserted Village*.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,  
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,  
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,  
A village master taught his little school.  
A man severe he was, and stern to view;  
I knew him well, and every truant knew;  
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace  
The day's disaster in his morning face:  
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee  
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;  
Full well the busy whisper circling round  
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.  
Yet he was kind; or, if severe in aught,  
The love he bore to learning was in fault;  
The village all declared how much he knew.  
'Twas certain he could write and cypher, too;  
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,  
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge;

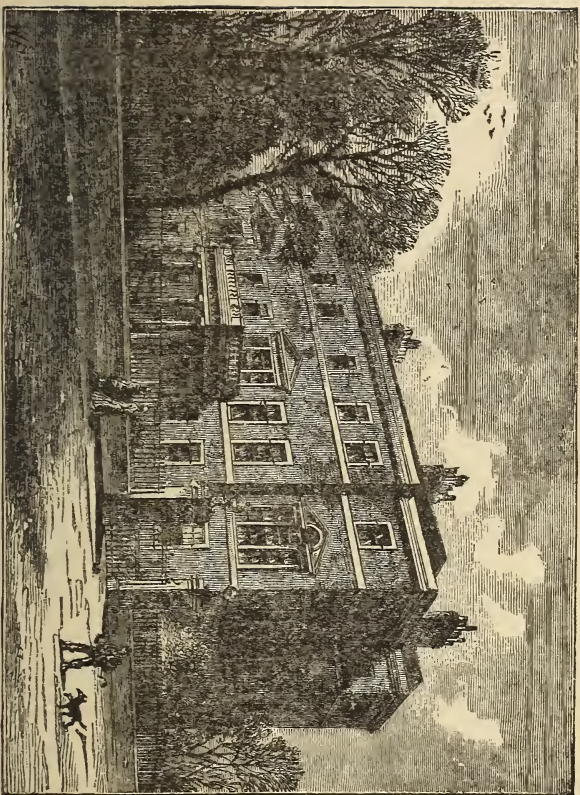
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,  
For, e'en though vanquished, he could argue still,  
While words of learned length and thundering sound  
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around.  
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew  
That one small head could carry all he knew.

## XIII.

## DOCTOR JOHNSON AND HIS TIMES. — III.

The Doctor and his lady friends — Mrs. Thrale and her guests at Streatham — Fanny Burney's first novel — Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu and the "Blue-stockings" — Amusements and festivities at "Thrale Hall" — Tea-parties and fashionable society in London — Favorite topics of conversation in 1780 — Doctor Johnson as a talker — His whimsical household at Bolt Court — His house as seen to-day — Mrs. Thrale's marriage and coldness to old friends — Last days of Dr. Johnson.

**A**MONG Dr. Johnson's friends were several ladies noted in that day for their wit, learning, beauty and social grace. It was the age of brilliancy in conversation, and dinner-parties at three or four in the afternoon were followed by tea-parties in the evening, or "assemblies," which were very like our "receptions" and to which numbers were invited for



Mrs. Montague's house, Putnam Square.



the purpose of conversation, cards, and a cup of tea. Dr. Johnson was frequently to be seen in society of this kind as well as at his club and the dinners of his gentleman friends ; and for some years he was almost a constant guest in one particular household, that of Mrs. Thrale at Streatham, of which I must tell you.

Mrs. Thrale was the wife of a wealthy brewer and was noted for her vivacity, cleverness, and powers of entertaining company. She was the friend of all the great literary men and women of the day. She was good-humored, obliging and witty, but wanting in depth or tenderness of feeling. To her friends she was everything while her affection lasted ; and to Dr. Johnson both she and her husband were for years all that kind and indulgent friends could be.

“Thrale Hall,” at Streatham, was near enough to London to make the drive in and out easy in a few hours ; and the great family coach with its liveried servants was often seen in Fleet Street near Bolt Court waiting to fetch Dr. Johnson to the hospitable country-house. His room there was constantly in readiness ; a plate was always laid for him at table, and he was considered so much one of the household that people who wanted to see him went oftener in search of him to Streatham than to his own house in Bolt Court.

Every attention was paid to him by the Thrales and their household. The Doctor's carelessness in dress was such that Mrs. Thrale wisely provided some fine additions to his wardrobe which were kept for him at The Hall; and at the dinner hour, as he passed from the library to the dining-room, a servant stationed in the vestibule gravely lifted his old brown wig from his head and replaced it with a fresh one — the old wig being laid on his dressing-table for use on the following day.

To Streatham came, as I have said, all the literary celebrities of the day. Among others Miss Fanny Burney, a young lady whose fame in 1778 was something extraordinary. She was the daughter of Doctor Burney, the musical critic, and had written a novel called *Evelina; or a Young Lady's Introduction to the World*, which was published anonymously, not even her own parents knowing that she was the author. She sent it privately to an obscure bookseller named Lowndes, who paid her a small sum for it, and waited in fear and trembling for its appearance in the world.

The book was hardly on his counters for sale before it became the great topic of the hour. Edmund Burke sat up all night to read it; Dr. Johnson went about wildly asking every friend he met who was the author; and Miss Burney's own family read it aloud



Mrs. Thrale.



with expressions of wonderment and delight, not knowing that the frightened little authoress sat by listening. *Evelina* may be read to-day with interest and pleasure. It gives a perfect picture of the life of the day, and is quite free from all the coarseness which disfigured Richardson's and Fielding's novels.

Mrs. Thrale, who was always on the watch for new literary celebrities, was determined to discover the author of the famous *Evelina*; and Dr. Burney, to whom Fanny had confided her secret, whispered it in confidence to Mrs. Thrale.\* Accordingly Miss Fanny was at once invited to Streatham where she was petted, praised, and lionized to the utmost. In the *Diary* published after her death, in 1840, we may read a detailed account of the period; of Dr. Johnson's sayings and doings at Streatham; and of a host of other noted people.

Among others came the celebrated Mrs. Montagu, famous for her wonderful powers of conversation, and for her elegant entertainments in Portman Square, where she established a literary society which became known as the "Bas-Bleus" or "Blue-Stockings," from

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\* Miss Burney afterwards wrote *Cecilia* and *Camilla*, besides a *Life* of her father, etc. She was married in 1793 to Monsieur D'Arblay, one of the French *émigrés*.

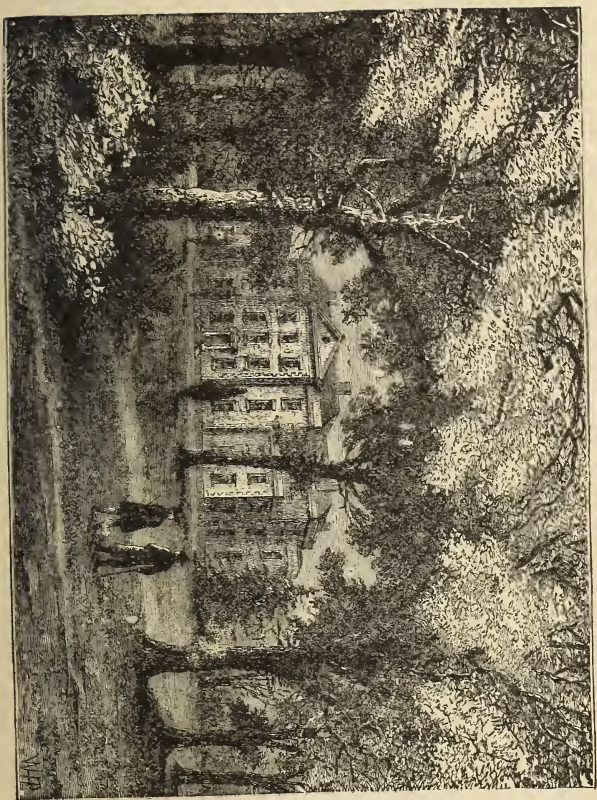
which we have the term in present use. The name originated in a trifling circumstance :

Among those who attended Mrs. Montagu's assemblies was a Mr. Stillingfleet, a well-known author but noted for his carelessness in dress. A gentleman seeing him in the midst of the elegant company one evening in gray knitted stockings, gave the people who tolerated this the name of "The Blue-Stocking Society."

"Ah," exclaimed a Frenchman who was present, "*les bas-bleus !*" and the name thus applied has clung ever since to literary people.

Mrs. Montagu was not the only distinguished guest who met Dr. Johnson and Fanny Burney at Streatham. Thither came Richard Brinsley Sheridan, dramatist and orator, a gay, reckless, handsome young man who was one of the greatest geniuses of the age. In *The School for Scandal* Sheridan showed the great social folly and vice of his time, that of gossiping about everybody's private affairs, which, indeed, was prevalent in the days when Mrs. Thrale and Mrs. Montagu were at the height of their fame ; and the play when first performed in London created a profound sensation.

At Streatham the mode of life was typical of the period. The guests usually strolled about the grounds



Mrs. Thrale's house, Streatham.



or read in the library for half an hour before the ten o'clock breakfast. The mornings were passed in various occupations ; but all re-assembled at three or four o'clock for the afternoon dinner, as customary in the houses of the gentry. •

After dinner came tea in the drawing-room, when Dr. Johnson always drank innumerable cups which Fanny Burney poured out for him while he sat near the urn talking, or rather discoursing in his deep voice, interrupting himself now and then for a hearty laugh.\*

Supper in the dining-room at ten or eleven concluded the day ; but it was a meal over which all the guests lingered, being sociable and brilliant, and I think the Streatham dining-room must have been in itself a fascinating room ; for it was adorned with portraits painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. There were the pretty, gay Mrs. Thrale and her handsome, reserved daughters, the master of the house, and Dr. Johnson, its presiding genius ; these and many others hung about the dining-room walls.

Occasionally all the party used to go into London together ; meeting soon after for a *conversazione* at Mrs. Thrale's grand town house in Grosvenor Square, or at Mrs. Montagu's where all that was brilliant,

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\* The tea-urn used at Thrale Hall during this period was recently sold at auction for a great price.

learned, or beautiful in London society was sure to be found. They were a very worldly set of people, I fear !

Many names have come down to us since that period famous for nothing better than the beauty which lasted but a few short years, or the wit which consisted in certain flippant speeches and sparkling repartees uttered in the celebrated drawing-rooms of the day. Society, however, was very much better than it had been a century before. Learning had advanced ; statesmanship was an art ; and with this period are connected the names of Fox and Burke, Sheridan and Pitt. Ladies of rank began to take an interest in attending the debates in the Houses of Parliament, and the American Revolution was talked of over many a cup of tea in Mrs. Montagu's drawing-rooms.

Dr. Johnson was well enough pleased to exchange the dullness of Bolt Court, or even the gayer supper company at his club, for the animated *conversazioni* in the Thrale and Montagu circles ; and we can picture him, always quaint and rusty in dress, arriving at Portman Square in his sedan chair and making his way into the brilliant drawing-rooms, where every possible color and fabric, every variety of jewels, laces and embroidery are displayed in the costumes

of the guests: the ladies with towering powdered heads, crowned with ostrich plumes, in which diamonds flash, with stiff brocaded gowns, mitts, huge fans, and high-heeled shoes; the gentlemen in long "cut-away" coats with wide pocket-flaps at the sides, vast waistcoats of embroidered satin, tight knee-breeches and silk stockings, their powdered hair drawn into a queue at the back, their faces ornamented with black "patches" and sometimes with powder and paint itself.

We can fancy these people discussing the topics of their day,—the forgeries of the boy-poet Chatterton, whose melancholy death excited all London; the wonderful letters of "Junius" about whose authorship all England was curious;\* or the Italian music at the opera-house, which was then a novelty. English art, too, was in its way a fresh and novel subject; for the Royal Academy was only just fairly started, and but few English painters were known. And the scientific experiments of Watt and Benjamin Franklin were the subject of endless speculation.

Dr. Johnson, we may be sure, had an opinion on

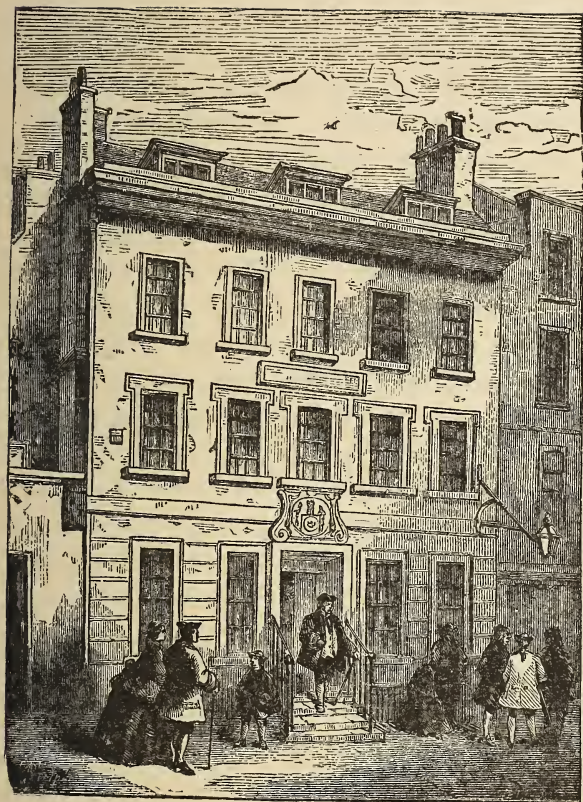
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\* These admirable Letters appeared in the most respectable newspaper of the day, the *Public Advertiser*, and were on various political topics. They were signed *Junius*; but in spite of every effort made their author was not discovered. Quite recently experts have decided that "Junius" must have been Sir Philip Francis (1740—1818.)

every subject, whether discussed among the "Bas-Bleus" or the witty gentlemen of the club ; and even in his own house in Bolt Court his conversations were worthy of record, odd and mixed as was the company he had gathered about him there.

Bolt Court still exists, and you may walk into it from Fleet Street, just as Dr. Johnson did, through a low, narrow passage under a shop which brings you into a paved court, long and narrow, and surrounded by respectable old brick buildings. The visitor who has once seen a picture of Dr. Johnson's house will quickly recognize it here at the upper end of the court — a long shallow building with a quaint doorway in the centre and heavy knocker. The rooms within are large and comfortable ; the panels and woodwork of the awkward winding staircase are of oak, unchanged since the Doctor and his friends were here : and we can almost see him and his eccentric household enter and mount these well-worn steps.

What an odd company it was ! In the upper rooms lived a Miss Williams, an old lady who managed the Doctor's modest establishment, and to whom he gave a home because she had been a friend of his wife. Robert Levett, a man who had some knowledge of medicine but no faculty for making his way in the world, also lived in the house : and so did a Mrs.



Dr. Johnson's house, in Bolt Court.



Desmoulins and her daughter, to whom, besides shelter, Johnson gave half a guinea ( \$ 2.62 ) a week. A Miss Carmichael also seems to have been one of the household, and a negro servant, Frank, who had been a sort of legacy to the Doctor from a friend. Johnson wrote of his " happy family " to Mrs. Thrale :

" Williams hates everybody. Levett hates Desmoulins and does not love Williams. Desmoulins hates them both. Poll ( Miss Carmichael ) loves none of them ! "

Levett and Miss Williams both died a year or two before their benefactor, and, in spite of the wrangling which had gone on in the household, Dr. Johnson truly mourned them.

About the same time a cloud came over his friendship for Mrs. Thrale ; and, though for a time he continued to visit Streatham, he was no longer happy there. Mrs. Thrale had decided, against the advice of all her friends, to marry an Italian singer named Piozzi ; and, as Johnson strongly disapproved of the marriage their friendship was no longer the source of rest and comfort it had been to him. Mrs. Thrale married Piozzi after various delays, and withdrew gradually both from Dr. Johnson and her once loved and petted Fanny Burney.

The Doctor was very feeble in health at this time

and ventured but rarely from Bolt Court; but he never lacked pleasant society. The most famous men of the time used to come and sit at his bed-side; and he retained his wonderful powers of conversation until the very last day of his life. He died on the 13th of December, 1784, and was buried in Westminster Abbey by the side of Goldsmith's monument.

The Poet's Corner where he sleeps is full of the great names of English Literature; but as a recent biographer has said, there has seldom lived a man so widely known and admired and beloved, not for what he wrote but for what he *was*, as Samuel Johnson.

WRITERS OF THE PERIOD.

SAMUEL JOHNSON, L. L. D. 1709 — 1784. Lexicographer, poet and essayist. Wrote "Dictionary of the English Language," various poems and essays in the *Rambler* and the *Idler*, etc. "Rasselas, or the Happy Valley" ( a story ); "Irene " ( a tragedy ); "Life of Savage;" "Lives of the Poets;" "A Journey to the Hebrides;" ( Ed. ) "Shakespeare with preface and notes;" "London ( a satire );" "A Volume of Political Essays,"etc.

JAMES BOSWELL. 1740 — 1795, Barrister and writer. Known solely by his "Life of Dr. Johnson," which ought to be classed with Johnson's work as it is simply a record of the daily life and remarkable conversation of his learned friend.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH. 1728 — 1774. Poet, novelist and dramatist. Wrote "The Traveler;" "The Deserted Village;" "The Hermit, or the story of Edwin and Angelina" ( poems ); "The Vicar of Wakefield" ( a novel ); "The Good-natured Man" and "She Stoops to Conquer" ( comedies ); "Histories of Greece, Rome, England," and a "History of Animated Nature;" "The Citizen of the World;" or "Letters from a Chinese Philosopher, residing in London, to his Friends in the East," etc.

EDMUND BURKE. 1728 — 1797. Statesman and author. Wrote "A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful;" "Reflections on the Revolution in France," etc. Burke's speeches in Parliament, especially on the impeachment of Warren Hastings, are among the grandest orations of modern times.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN. 1751 — 1816. Dramatist, statesman and orator. Wrote the following plays: "The Rivals;" "The Duenna;" "The School for Scandal;" "The Critic;" "The Stranger;" and "Pizarro," (the last two being adaptations from the German of Kotzebue.) Sheridan also wrote some masterly speeches, etc.

EDWARD GIBBON. 1737 — 1794. Historian. Wrote "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;" "Autobiography," etc.

DAVID HUME. 1711 — 1766. Historian and infidel philosopher. Wrote "History of England;" and many famous essays.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON. 1721 — 1793. Historian. Wrote "History of Scotland;" "History of America;" "History of Charles V.," etc.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON. 1689 — 1767. Novelist and printer. Called the "Father of the English novel." Wrote "Pamela;" "Clarissa Harlowe;" "Sir Charles Grandison."

HENRY FIELDING. 1797 — 1754. Novelist. Wrote "Joseph Andrews;" "Tom Jones," etc.

TOBIAS GEORGE SMOLLETT. 1721 — 1777. Novelist. Wrote "Roderick Random;" "Peregrine Pickle;" "Humphrey Clinker," etc.

WILLIAM COLLINS. 1720 — 1765. Lyric poet. Wrote "Ode to the Passions," etc.

EDWARD YOUNG. 1684 — 1765. Poet. Author of "Night Thoughts," etc.

THOMAS GRAY. 1716 — 1771. Lyric poet. Wrote "Elegy in a Country Church-yard," etc.

MARK AKENSIDE, M. D. 1721 — 1770. Poet. Wrote "Pleasures of the Imagination, etc."

LORD CHESTERFIELD. [ Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield. ] 1694 — 1773. A famous leader in society and celebrated for his "Letters to his Son ( on Fashion, etiquette, and worldly success, etc. )"

RT. HON. CHARLES JAMES FOX. 1749 — 1806. Statesman and orator. His speeches in Parliament have been published in six volumes.

SIR PHILIP FRANCIS. 1740 — 1818. Political writer. Supposed author of the famous "Letters of Junius."

HORACE WALPOLE, Earl of Orford. 1717 — 1797. Wrote "Aedes Walpolianae," ( a catalogue of his father's pictures, etc. ) ; "Catalogue of Royal and Noble authors ;" "Catalogue of Engravers," ( Illustrated ) ; "Castle of Otranto ;" "The Mysterious Mother." ( a drama ) ; "Memoirs ;" "Correspondence," etc.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU. 1690 — 1762. Known chiefly for her remarkable "Letters." A few of her poems and essays were published but are of little value.

MRS. ELIZABETH MONTAGU. 1729 — 1800. [ Cousin of Lady Mary. ] Wrote "An Essay on Shakespeare," ( in reply to Voltaire ). Also noted for her "Letters" published after her death.

MADAME FRANCES D'ARBLAY [ Miss Burney ] 1752 — 1840. Novelist, etc. Wrote "Evelina ;" "Cecilia ;" "Camilla," ( novels ) ; "The Wanderer," ( a tale ) ; "Edwin and Edgitha," ( a tragedy ) ; "Memoir of her father, Dr. Burney ;" and her famous "Diary and Letters," etc.

ALEXANDER CRUDEN. 1701 — 1770. Bible scholar. Famous for his one work, the "Concordance of the Holy Scriptures."

ELIZABETH CARTER. 1717 — 1806. Classical scholar, etc. Works : "Translation of Epictetus ;" "Explanation of Newton's Philosophy for the use of Ladies ;" "Ode to Wisdom," and other poems, etc.

ALLAN RAMSAY. 1625 — 1758, Scotch poet. Wrote "The

Gentle Shepherd," (a pastoral comedy) ; "Tea-table Miscellany," (a collection of songs) etc.

THOMAS CHATTERTON. 1752 — 1770. Poet and literary imposter. His principal poems are "The Tragedy of Ella;" "Ode to Ella;" "Execution of Sir Charles Bawdin;" "Battle of Hastings;" "The Tournament;" "Canyng's Feast," etc.

JOHN WESLEY. 1703 — 1791. and CHARLES WESLEY. 1708 — 1788. Founders of Methodism and famous for their hymns and theological writings.

#### MINOR POETS OF THE PERIOD.

William Mason, Matthew Green, Rev. John Dyer, William Shenstone, Charles Churchill, John Byrom, Ann Steele, William Falconer, John Armstrong, Christopher Anstey, William Whitehead, William Julius Mickle, etc., etc.

#### THEOLOGICAL WRITERS.

Bishop Warburton, Bishop Challoner, Alban Butler, John Gill, Nathaniel Gardner.

## XIV.

### THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, dramatist and orator — His brilliant career and sad end — Cowper and his poems — Early melancholy and subsequent insanity — Origin of the ballad of John Gilpin — Lady Austen suggests the *Task* — Horace Walpole and the associations of "Strawberry Hill" — Gray's *Elegy in a Country Church-yard* — An extraordinary auction sale — Robert Burns, the ploughboy, becomes a social lion at Edinburgh — His temptation and fall — Chatterton, the "boy-poet" and literary forger — His singular deceptions and sad ending.

**I**N this chapter we can only glance at the career of a few authors whose place in English literature belongs to the same period as Dr. Johnson's though it extends as far as the end of the century.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the dramatist and author, of whom some mention has already been made in the story of Dr. Johnson, was a distinguished and brilliant man, much admired in London society

but unfortunately dissipated in his habits and possessed of a passion for running into debt, which made his last years almost disgraceful. He was born in 1751, and early in life married a Miss Linley, of Bath, a famous beauty whose picture you may see to-day in the gallery at Dulwich. He came to live in London, where his first play, *The Rivals*, was performed in 1775, with immense success. Not long after he produced *The School for Scandal*, and later, *The Critic*, and by these three plays he will always be known and admired. Sheridan wrote other plays, and also entered quite a difficult career. He became a member of Parliament, where he distinguished himself by making one of the greatest speeches ever uttered in the House of Commons. The occasion was the trial of Warren Hastings, who had been Governor General of India, and was accused of gross mismanagement and fraud. Sheridan might have earned the highest place in the history of his time, but for his unfortunate habits. He died in 1816.

William Cowper, born in 1731, was a poet of wide celebrity in his day, and his comic ballad, *John Gilpin*, and famous poem *The Task*, are still read with enjoyment and profit. Cowper's life was extremely sad. He was afflicted with a nervous melancholy which sometimes resulted in outbreaks of insanity ;

but his periods of rest were cheered by kind friends, among whom a Mrs. Unwin and Lady Austen were the nearest. Cowper was the son of a clergyman ;



WILLIAM COWPER.

he chose the law as his profession and occupied rooms in the Temple where he used to spend more time in writing "gay verses" and dining with literary friends than in looking for legal work. His father

died leaving him but a scanty income, and his mental affliction debarred him from accepting the government appointment which his friends secured for him. For a time he had to be sent to an asylum, and on coming out he went to his kind friends, the Unwins. Here it was that he met Lady Austen, who told him the comical story of John Gilpin's ride, which he immediately put into verse. The same lady afterwards suggested to him a poem of greater length. "I will set you a task," she said one day.

"What shall it be?" asked Cowper.

"Oh, begin about anything," answered Lady Austen, "the sofa," touching the one on which she sat.

Forthwith Cowper developed his idea of a long poem in blank verse which he called *The Task*, and the first portion of which was *The Sofa*. Mrs. Unwin's death plunged Cowper into grief and melancholy, his insanity returned, and in 1800 he died.

In the pictures of the last half of the Eighteenth century we see always a certain elegant, graceful figure, a fine gentleman with a dignified air and assumed cynicism, or love of ridiculing real feeling and sentiment, a man of great talent, which he was always trying to hide as if ashamed of it. This was Horace Walpole, the son of Sir Robert Walpole, Prime Minister of George II. He will always have a

certain celebrity, both for his famous letters and memoirs, and for the associations of his home, "Strawberry Hill," which in the reign of George III was noted for its distinguished and brilliant society. Here Walpole had gathered together every sort of bric-a-brac, making his house and grounds a museum of quaint and beautiful objects from every country and period known to history. Walpole was a better man at heart than he allowed the world to believe, for he scoffed and sneered at the very things he really admired, and turned to ridicule his own sentiments. His letters are addressed to various people, but those to Mann and Conway are the best known. He became Earl of Oxford in 1791, and died in 1797.

Thomas Gray, [1716--1771.] author of *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, and other poems, was one of Walpole's early friends. Gray led a secluded life which he devoted to writing, and was less known to the people of Johnson's day personally, than by fame. The original manuscript of Gray's *Elegy* was sold at auction in London in 1845. The two small half-sheets of paper on which it was written brought £100 sterling. The MS. included five verses omitted from the editions published in Gray's lifetime.

Robert Burns, (1759--1796] a Scotch poet, was the

youngest of the great writers of the Eighteenth century. He was a poor plough boy and published his first volume when very young, for the benefit and amusement of his country neighbors. A Dr. Blacklock, meeting with the book, invited Burns to Edinburgh, where he was cordially received by the best class of people. Edinburgh was then beginning to rank very high in the literary world, and an enthusiastic circle formed around the young poet whose future seemed to promise great things ; but unfortunately he fell into habits of intemperance, and died at the early age of thirty-seven. His ballads, poems and fragmentary verses, beautiful as they are, only show us what he might have done had he lived to grow stronger than his temptations and make the best of his genius.

Thomas Chatterton, [175-1770] known as the "boy poet," was much talked of in Dr. Johnson's day, and certainly few lives have been more extraordinary than his. His father being sexton of an old church at Bristol, he managed to gain access to some parchment manuscripts of the Fifteenth century, which were kept in the muniment room ; and these probably gave him the idea for his famous forgeries. He wrote some beautiful poems which he published as the work of an imaginary monk called "Thomas Rowley," and

a merchant named "W. Canynge," declaring that he had discovered them in an old chest in the church. These and other forgeries in imitation of old MSS. deceived many people and provoked endless discussion among antiquarians and scholars including Dr. Johnson, Horace Walpole, Gibbon and others. Chatterton came to London, sought literary employment, hung about the coffee-houses to listen to the conversation of Goldsmith, Dr. Johnson and other noted men, but his pride prevented his making known the real want he was in. It reached to absolute hunger, but he refused the dinner offered by his landlady, and the next day was found dead in his miserable garret—some said by suicide; horror, perhaps, at the web of falsehood he had weaved about himself in trying to carry on his impositions, despair, and actual hunger, drove him to the reckless deed; and instead of developing and elevating his wonderful talents, he ended his life thus disgracefully, in his eighteenth year.

Before the close of the last century many men and women had begun work which afterwards made their names famous, but their story belongs to the Nineteenth century, and must be given in a separate volume. We have now traced, in a sort of outline only, the story of English Literature from the time of

Chaucer, to that of Cowper and Dr. Johnson, and have seen the gradual change worked in the minds and manners and affairs of men during four centuries. Poetry, the Drama, History, Fiction, Oratory and the writing of Essays — all these were clearly developed at the close of the Eighteenth century. But the period we have just been considering, that of Dr. Johnson, had one great defect: it was artificial. Men wrote and talked in an unnatural, high-flown, or even frivolous strain. I do not refer, of course, to great statesmen, like Burke, the two Pitts, Fox and Sheridan nor yet to the clergy; but to society in general, and to the most popular writers of the day. A simple, frank, and natural style was wanting. Burns, indeed, who depended upon only his natural feelings, having but little education and nothing of what is called *culture*, wrote in a simple, unaffected strain which could hardly have been imitated. Gray came near to it, being strange and at the same time natural. But perfect freedom and at the same time grace in poetry, the natural and true to life in fiction, and a well-balanced completeness and finish in criticism and biography belong to the Nineteenth century. As we go into it we must take leave of the gay and splendid company we have been journeying with; we are to see no more ruffs and brocades, cocked-hats,

knee-breeches, swords and sedan-chairs ; but if the scenes we are about to pass into are less picturesque, they will at all events seem more real, for they are only those of *our* yesterday, and the names we shall read, the faces we shall see, the voices whose words we shall try to catch, are those familiar to our own times. If vanished, it was but a little time ago, and if among us, to be heard and seen constantly with some new expression.

FROM COWPER'S *Task*.[*Rural Sonnds.*]

Not rural sights alone, but rural sounds  
Exbilarate the spirit, and restore  
The tone of languid nature. Mighty winds  
That sweep the skirt of some far spreading wood  
Of ancient growth, make music not unlike  
The dash of ocean on his winding shore,  
And lull the spirit while they fill the mind.  
Unnumbered branches waving in the blast,  
And all their leaves fast fluttering all at once.  
Nor less composure waits upon the roar  
Of distant floods, or on the softer voice  
Of neighboring fountains, or of rills that slip  
Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they fall  
Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length  
In matted grass, that, with a livelier green,  
Betrays the secret of their silent course.

SONG BY ROBERT BURNS.

MENIE.

Again rejoicing nature sees  
Her robe assume its vernal hues,  
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,  
All freshly steeped in morning dews.

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,  
In vain to me the violets spring ;  
In vain to me in glen or shaw,  
The mavis and the lintwhite sing.

The merry plough-boy cheers his team,  
Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks ;  
But life's to me a weary dream,  
A dream of one that never wauks.

The wanton coot the water skims,  
Among the reeds the ducklings cry ;  
The stately swan majestic swims,  
And everything is blessed but I.

The shepherd steeks his faulding slap,  
And owre the moorland whistles shrill ;  
Wi' wild, unequal, wandering step,  
I meet him on the dewy hill.

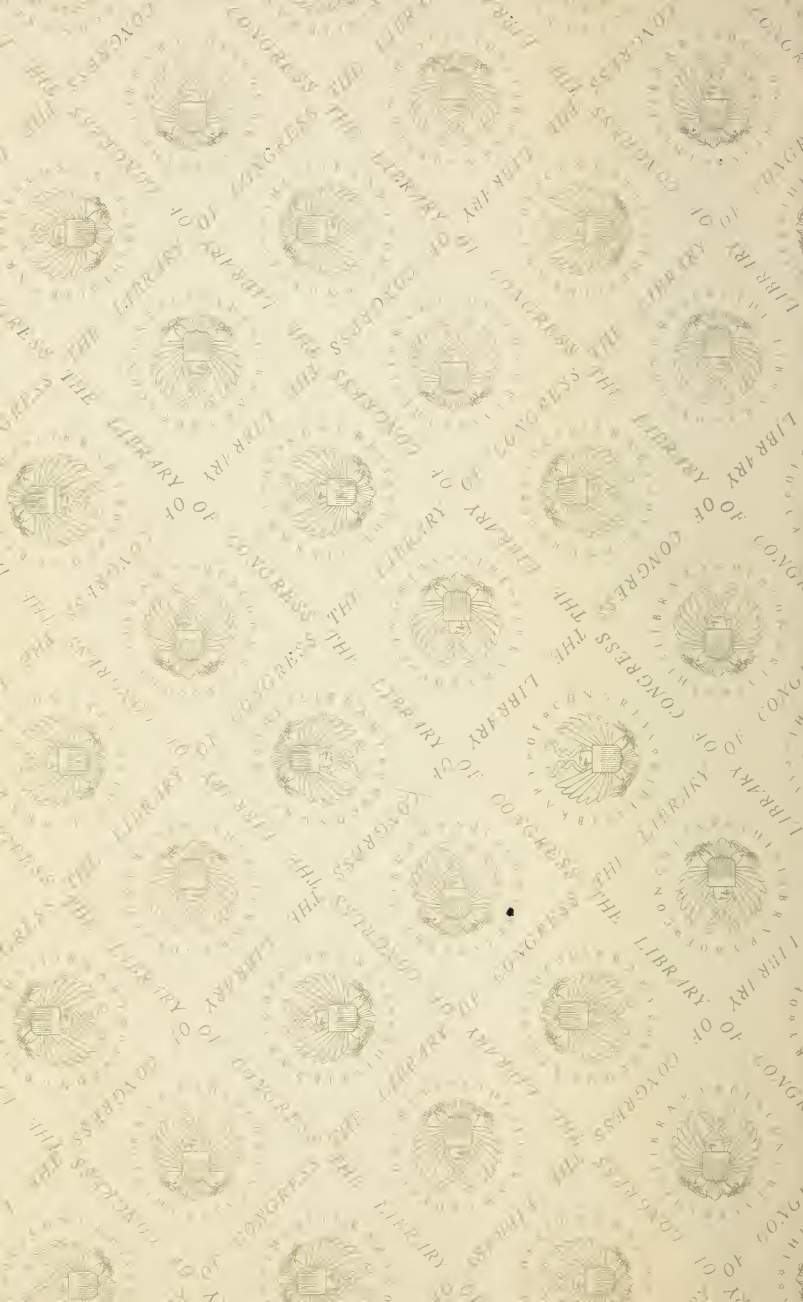
And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,  
Blithe waukens by the daisy's side :  
And mounts and sings on flittering wings  
A wo-worn ghaist, I hameward glide.

Come, Winter, with thine angry howl,  
And raging bend the naked tree.  
Thy gloom will soothe my cheerless soul,  
When nature all is sad like me.



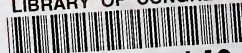








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